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SERMONS

PREACHED IN INDIA

SERMONS

PREACHED TO ENGLISH CONGREGATIONS IN INDIA

BY

GEORGE EDWARD LYNCH COTTON, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF CALCUTTA

METROPOLITAN IN INDIA AND THE ISLAND OF CEYLON

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NEW-STREET SQUARE

TO

THE ARCHDEACON

AND

GOVERNMENT CHAPLAINS,

MISSIONARIES AND NATIVE PASTORS,

WITH

ALL OTHER MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND

LABOURING IN

THE DIOCESE OF CALCUTTA

IN 1866,

These Sermons are Inscribed

IN MEMORY OF HIM WHO WROTE THEM,

AND WHOM IN THAT YEAR GOD CALLED UNTO HIMSELF

FROM

HIS CHURCH MILITANT ON EARTH.

PREFACE.

THE SERMONS in this small volume have been selected, with scarcely an exception, from those which were preached between the years 1863 and 1866, to English congregations under the varied circumstances of place and season which an Indian Bishop encounters. The manuscripts were never revised by the writer; and it is therefore possible that in some passages the thoughts or expressions of others may be detected, without the reference which should accompany them, and which I regret to have been unable to supply except in one or two instances. The Bishop's reading was constant and extensive; and hence, sometimes deliberately, sometimes unconsciously, he blended with his own subject matter, the aid he derived from other sources.

The calm persuasive teaching which, apart from all influences from without, will be recognised in these Sermons, was the fruit of the Bishop's own experiences

and sympathies, and was the expression of that ever-deepening sense of sin in the world, and of that tenacious grasp of the life-giving truths of the Gospel, which formed the mainsprings of his inner life and outward action. The first and two last sermons are the earliest and latest preached in the Diocese.

S. A. C.

London: 1867.

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SERMON I.

CALCUTTA CATHEDRAL, 1858.

THE APOSTOLIC BLESSING.

Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.—Eph. vi. 24.

Such was the benediction with which St. Paul closed his exhortations to the Christians scattered in the great heathen city of Ephesus, or rather—if their opinion is true who maintain that the Epistle to the Ephesians is a circular letter addressed to the inhabitants of Laodicea and other towns no less than Ephesus—scattered over many cities in the west and central regions of Asia Minor. Contemplating this small body of the faithful surrounded by pagan multitudes, these elect of God, gathered together out of the world to be His Church and people, to show forth the praise of Him who called them out of darkness into His marvellous light, the Apostle, at the close of his Epistle, heaps blessing after blessing upon them, as he had before been heaping precept upon precept, exhortation on exhortation. *Peace be to the brethren*, he prays, *and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.* For

He feels that upon them everything depends, that they are the city set upon a hill, that by their pure example, their growth in goodness, their holy and self-denying lives, the excellency and divinity of the Gospel is to be proved, the borders of Christ's Church extended, the heathen persuaded that God is of a truth with that despised society, which as yet was no more than the little cloud rising out of the sea like a man's hand, unobserved perhaps by the careless traveller, but foretelling to the prophet the abundance of rain by which the thirsty land was to be restored to life and energy. And thus not only does St. Paul call down upon them from heaven every help and blessing, but he feels drawn to them all with the warmth of a close and personal affection, he makes no exceptions, he acknowledges no differences: *Grace be with them all*, if only they love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Doubtless, there must have been among those whom he thus blesses numerous varieties of character, of disposition, of opinion, of progress in Christian knowledge and Christian practice. Partly in this very Epistle to the Ephesians, but more clearly in the contemporary letter to the Colossians, read perhaps by the very same persons as this one, there are abundant indications that defective views of Christian truth were entertained, against which the Apostle earnestly warns his readers, though he abates nothing from the tone of deep affection and earnest hope in which he always loves to address his brethren in Christ. He feels that, compared with the great bond of a common redemption, such variations shrink into insignificance: he labours indeed for their removal, *warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that he might pre-*

sent every man perfect in Christ Jesus; but still he always seems to turn with hope and confidence to the great fact that they are Christians, that they believe in and acknowledge the only Name under Heaven given among men whereby we must be saved. Nor was Christian practice in the Apostle's days less imperfect than Christian doctrine. These very Ephesians required that he should exhort them to remember the plainest distinctions between right and wrong. The Corinthians, whom he has to rebuke sharply for tolerating practices inconsistent with Christian morality—disorders fatal to the decency of Christian worship, doctrines threatening the very foundations of Christian truth—are yet regarded with affection as men called to be saints, and sanctified in Christ Jesus, because as long as they adhered to the great principle of belief in Christ, and resisted the temptations to desert Him and return to the world of heathenism or Judaism, he felt united with them by a tie which they had not yet severed, and which seems to his fervent and devoted spirit almost indissoluble. Doubtless, we can literally apply to the men of our day all the feelings with which St. Paul regarded his contemporaries. In spite of the laxity in practice and deficiency in knowledge which prevailed in the apostolic age, there is more of nominal Christianity now than there was then, since the worldly motives to embrace it were very slight and transitory, and the mere fact of professing it was generally a proof of a real desire to live by it. The deficiencies of which the Apostle complains arose rather from human infirmity, from ignorance, from the wild spirit of speculation rife in his unquiet age, from the force of heathen practices and

immoral habits, contracted in early life, than from hypocrisy, or formalism, or indifference. But still, allowing for this change of circumstances, there is surely more than a mere superficial resemblance between our religious position in this country and that of the bands of Christians who assembled together for worship in the great heathen cities of Asia Minor. In both cases, those who offer their prayers and thanksgivings to God, as revealed to them in Jesus Christ, are united together by a bond which no differences of opinion on points of detail ought to break asunder. Such differences there must be in every congregation of Christians; nay, variations must exist in matters of more importance than opinion, degrees of living faith, of growth in grace, of holiness, of purity, of Christian wisdom, of the practical power which Christianity exerts upon their hearts and lives. But still, when a stranger comes into this country, and sees himself surrounded on all sides by millions of unbelievers; when he finds even his own dwelling no longer tenanted by those who share his own faith, but by dependents appointed indeed to attend to his temporal wants but separated from him altogether in spirit by the absence of those ties which made his English home a Christian household—he cannot but turn with eager anticipation and a deep feeling of brotherhood and sympathy to those who are partakers of his own best and brightest hopes; he cannot but pray that God's grace may be with them all, and build up all in His most holy faith, and grant to all *according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man, that they may know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and be filled with all*

the fullness of God. To them he must feel drawn as his chief hope, and stay, and support: amidst any divergences of thought or practice, which may hereafter trouble him, he still must call down God's blessing on them all, and hope, and pray, and believe that they may love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, so that God's grace may be with them, and guide them into holiness and all truth. In their judgments on some points, even of religious belief and practice, they may differ from each other, and from himself: in devotion to one Master, in acknowledging one law of life, in the hope of one blessed future, he feels that they are all one. Nor will he even limit his prayer and blessing to those who adore the same Saviour with the same outward observances as those which he has learned to love and value for himself. Here, if anywhere, we see the full force of St. Paul's assurance that circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, that forms are nothing, and the absence of forms is nothing, but faith that worketh by love. We believe that though all modes of Christianity cannot be equally true and equally acceptable to God, yet that the differences between them are trifling, compared with that vast chasm which separates those who know the Lord Jesus from those who are strangers to His Salvation. Only let believers in Christ beware lest they feel alienated from each other, or jealous of each other, or prone to think evil of each other, or venture profanely and wickedly to exclude each other from the blessings of the Christian covenant. Rather let them think how infinitely more important are the points on which they are united, than those which separate them. Let them

reflect how great a thing it is to believe that there is in Heaven a Father who loves them, and cares for them, and watches over them; that on His right hand sits a Son who died to put away their sins, and now lives for ever to make intercession for them, and that from the Father and the Son comes a Spirit to guide them daily, and hold them up amidst their frequent falls, and support them under their constant temptations; that before them all is placed, as their great aim and object, a common life of truth, and justice, and mercy, and self-denial, and purity, and brotherly love, and active exertion in every good work; and that for all hereafter is prepared a common Home, where there will be no more sorrow and no more sin. Think what bonds of union are here; how we who all believe this and hope for this should cleave to one another, and help one another, and live or one another, when we compare it with the gulf which separates us from those who know of no Redemption, no Sanctification, no heavenly Friend and Father, but who either reject all belief in God or worship a deity who has commanded that the number of his votaries should be increased by war and bloodshed, or many so-called gods, who are to be propitiated by wicked rites and grovelling superstitions, and have themselves in human shape exemplified every most shameless form of fraud, and lust, and cruelty. Surely the mere recoil from such systems as these sends us back with fresh devotion and renewed faith, and quickened love to the few chosen servants of the Most High, and compels us to pray that we may all be strengthened by God's grace to exhort one another, while we have light, to believe in the light, that we may be the

children of light, and to let our light so shine before men, that Christianity may be acknowledged as no mere opinion or collection of dogmas, no philosophy or unpractical tradition, but as a spirit, a life, a principle which alone can change the heart, and bring forth living fruits of righteousness, to the praise and glory of God, and present and future welfare of men.

But while we believe that this spirit of widest mercy and lovingkindness was that in which St. Paul thus blessed and prayed for his Ephesian disciples, we must not forget that there is a limitation expressed in the text, and one which may guard us against the danger of attaching too much importance to, and building up too eager hopes on, the mere outward appearance and profession of Christianity. It is a limitation, too, which should lead us to look into our own hearts, and ask ourselves whether we can really claim an interest in the apostolic benediction. The prayer is, *Grace be with all them that love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.* The margin substitutes *in incorruption*, and either word conveys a sufficient warning that the love is to be pure, disinterested, heartfelt, earnest, practical; showing itself in obedience to the Will of Him *whom having not seen we love.* Especially it excludes that indifferent acquiescence in religion, as a matter of course, which is the chief danger of our age, when it is no longer persecuted but honoured and respected; when those who disbelieve or neglect it are viewed with doubt and suspicion; when many who seem devoted to it are rewarded by power and influence, and dignity and wealth. It excludes all profession of religion, unless its principles are consciously and deliberately appropriated to our own growth in holiness, and

the daily guidance and improvement of our lives. I do not mean that the Apostle would not have prayed for such, that he would have excluded them from the pale of his Christian sympathies, or neglected any occasion for doing them good; but still their state is not one which is at present receptive of God's grace; they are not among those whom the Father is drawing unto the Son; they must look into their own hearts, and watch over their besetting sins, and make their faith in Christ an inward practical feeling, instead of a mere name and pretence. We know that sincerity, truthfulness, reality, are the very essence of Christianity. Christ's prayer for His people is that they may be sanctified through the truth. No arrogant assumption that belief in revelation is necessary for the ignorant, and useful to maintain order and sanction morality among them, but needless for the enlightened few who can live in their own strength and do right from their own sense of propriety, and have penetrated beyond the mere outward forms of religion to a moral system which is the same in all, can satisfy the requirements of Him who came forth from the Father to cast down all proud and self-complacent thoughts, and to teach us that all alike, wise and foolish, rich and poor, great and humble, are sinners in His sight, and must be cleansed by His blood and taught by His Spirit. And so let us pay heed to the warning words *in sincerity*: let us remember that unless our love for Christ is simple, pure, personal, and above all practical, we cannot hope that the Apostle's prayer will draw down God's grace upon our souls.

But, on the other hand, we must not so press these words as to turn them from a merciful warning into a

harsh discouragement. In one sense, *to love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity* might be taken to express almost the highest stage of Christian progress, the true walking by faith and not by sight, the state of heart which all earnest Christians are struggling and praying to attain. We may be quite sure that the merciful Apostle, who had faithfully learned His Master's lesson not to break the bruised reed or quench the smoking flax, would not restrict his blessing to those who had already made such a marked advance in the grace of God. There are many in every congregation, doubtless there are many here, who find that a devoted love to Christ as to a living Person, and Teacher, and Guide, is a hard thing to realise; that the world is ever with them while their heavenly Friend is absent; that their own passions, their own wishes, their own selfish interests are ever rising up to hide Him from them, and so that though in their better moments they desire to love Him and to obey Him, though they act generally on Christian principle, deeply prize the Christian Name, long earnestly for true Christian devotedness to their Saviour, yet that their faith is weak, their temptations strong, that they find a difficulty in realising the abiding presence of Christ, and showing their love by their willing obedience. But let not such doubt that the Apostle's prayer was intended for them. In one sense they do love the Lord Jesus in *sincerity*; they desire to grow in the knowledge of His will, and strength to perform it. And so, if they only persevere, grace will strengthen and build them up, and confirm them in faith and earnest resolution, and teach them to love the Lord Jesus Christ with more and more reality, and to devote themselves with

more and more active energy to that service which is perfect freedom. Only, brethren, use this prayer for yourselves; use it often, live in the spirit which it implies, the spirit of seeking God's grace to guide and sanctify your lives, and teach you to love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.

And therefore, my brethren, for all—whether born in the faith of Christ, or won to it from heathenism in this land—who are desirous to *live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world*; all who, though it may be in much weakness, much doubt and uncertainty, much error, many falls, are yet grieved when they do wrong, and try to turn to God, and to believe that His Son is their Saviour, their Teacher, and their Hope,—I venture on this my first occasion of addressing you, to offer up the prayer of St. Paul: *Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity.* May God support your weakness and guide you into all truth! may He keep and strengthen such as do stand, and raise up them that fall! Only while I utter this wish and prayer for you, I feel that there is no one of this congregation who needs it more than he who is now offering it for his brethren. Anyone who is suddenly called into unknown scenes and untried duties longs for the support of Christian sympathy, and of Christian sympathy the most essential part is prayer. How much more does he require this help and comfort, who has been called unexpectedly to come among you as a chief pastor in the church of Christ, to be the spiritual guide and father of those who are here working in His cause, and thus has to take his place in the very forefront of that great army which

the Lord sends forth to do battle against every form of ungodliness. Most deep and urgent is his need of the Holy Spirit's help and blessing, that he may be found faithful to his high trust; that he may not be wholly unworthy to sit in the chair of Heber and of Wilson; that the Church of Christ may not suffer loss, nor the enemies of Christ gain advantage through his negligence or indifference, or erroneous judgment, but that in his time some progress may be made in building up in this heathen land the Temple of the living God. So, then, let us offer up for one another the united prayer, that God in His great mercy will grant us all Christian strength and Christian wisdom, to continue the work which the labourers who have gone before us have so faithfully and patiently begun; to reap, if it may be, the beginnings of that great harvest which must spring sooner or later from the seed which they have sown; but in any case to live and die as the devoted servants of Christ; and therefore, above all things, let each of us remember his own personal work, asking continually for God's help and blessing in his own soul, feeling how much he needs it before he can love the Lord Jesus with sincerity, and living constantly in the spirit of that prayer which will, I trust, never be forgotten in this diocese and in this cathedral—*God be merciful to me a sinner.*

SERMON II.

CAWNPORE, 1859.

MORAL COURAGE.

Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. . But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him.—Luke, xii. 4, 5.

THERE has been a question raised among interpreters of Scripture as to the exact meaning of these words. Who is he, it is asked, who *after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell*? Who is he whom we are thus above all others to fear? Some persons say that our Lord in these words meant to describe God, others the great enemy of souls. For both may be said to kill and to cast into hell. Our heavenly Father is the dispenser of death, from Him our earthly life came, to Him we owe it, and when He wills, *the spirit returns to God who gave it.* He, too, casts them into hell, over whom at the last day He shall utter the terrible voice of most just judgment, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.* On the other hand, it is no less true in another sense that the Evil One both kills and casts into hell. Sin is often the ruin of the body, always of

the soul, unless by God's mercy the sinner is aroused in time to seek safety in Jesus Christ. Soldiers know, by their own observation, sometimes by sad experience, better than most men, how the strongest bodily powers are undermined and destroyed by drinking and debauchery; how extravagance, how gambling, how idleness and neglect of duty lead to want and misery, to the sickness of wife and children, to a reckless desire of drowning sorrow by any means, and so to drunkenness and despair. All these instruments are used by Satan to kill the body, in anticipation of the yet more certain destruction of the soul. Taken in this sense, then, we can understand the text only too well, happy if we also profit by it, and step back in time from the edge of the precipice which overhangs the gulf yawning below us. We can understand that there is no enemy so cunning, so resolute, so formidable, none whose assaults we have so much cause to fear, as he who seeks by his wiles to destroy the bodily strength which God gave us that we might perform manfully and profitably our work in this world, and thereby to inflict the yet more awful injury of ruining that immortal soul which God created in His own image, and which He has redeemed by the precious blood of His own dear Son.

You see, then, brethren, that this explanation of the expression, *who after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell*, which makes it refer to the great enemy of souls, gives a perfectly intelligible sense, and one which conveys most solemn warnings to us all. Yet, on the whole, I incline to believe that our Lord by this phrase did not mean the Evil One, but God. Among various reasons for this I will only mention this one. If you

look on to the verses which follow the text, you will read the well-known words, *Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows.* Now, between our Lord's words there is always a connection, and it is very instructive to us to ascertain what this connection is. In the case before us, it seems as if in the text our Lord spoke of God as the dispenser of death and judgment: in the verses just read as the dispenser of life and mercy and blessing. As if He had said: Fear God above all things, but do not fear men, they can only kill the body by their persecution; but God, the righteous Judge, whom by our sins we are provoking every day, is able to destroy both body and soul in hell. And while you fear Him for His power and hatred for sin, you should also love Him for the mercy and tenderness with which He takes care of you and fills your hearts with food and gladness. He supplies with full hand the need of all living creatures; He cares even for the sparrows, though in human estimation they are all but valueless; much more then for you His own dear children, whose very hairs He has numbered with the tenderest love. It is in this way that the whole passage seems connected, and for this reason chiefly that I believe the text to teach us the duty, not of that anxious fear and watchfulness which shrinks from all contact with the Evil One, but of that reverential fear and obedience which listens carefully to the very least command of God. But at the same time it is quite clear that the two precepts are in fact closely connected: where the reverential fear of God prompts

us to obey Him in all things, then also that abhorrence of evil which fears the slightest stain of sinful pollution will lead us to flee from the wiles and suggestions of the Tempter. We may thus combine the two interpretations in one general lesson and say, Resist the devil and fear the subtle suggestions by which he drops into your heart the poison of sin; for his hateful influence keeps you from the fear of Him at whose voice all that are in the graves shall one day come forth, *they that have done good unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation.*

But the text teaches us something more than this. As yet we have only considered the latter half of it. It tells us not only whom we are to fear, but whom we are not to fear. *Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do.* We are commanded to fear God, but we are forbidden to fear men. Now, brethren, consider with yourselves how far you obey or disobey this precept. Do you fear men? Doubtless you do not fear them because it is in their power to kill the body.

There is no imputation which a soldier dreads so much as cowardice. He may be guilty of many other faults, not morally worse than this in God's sight, but these are extenuated either by the charity or indifference and laxity of those around him. But for personal cowardice there is in general no pardon to be expected from his friends and companions; nothing remains for him except to quit a service on which he has brought discredit, and hide his head for shame. And the reason for this severe dealing is that courage is the necessary characteristic of his profession, that a soldier who does

not possess this quality is not only a useless encumbrance, but even a dishonest impostor, because he has embraced a calling for which he is by nature unfitted, and in which it is impossible for him to render full and efficient service. Therefore in the former part of the text, *Be not afraid of them that kill the body*—at least in its first and obvious sense—you, my brethren, would seem to have very little to do. You have shown by resolute endurance of many dangers and hardships that there is no precept in the whole Bible which you are less disposed to violate than this—*Be not afraid of them which kill the body.* There is no congregation to whom the words before us seem less applicable than to one of English soldiers, no country where it would appear less necessary to remind them of it than India, no city in India where the advice would be more superfluous than this, rescued by heroic daring as it has been from those who have polluted it through fearful atrocities and shameful treason. But I fear, brethren, that though you are not afraid of any man because he kills the body, and though, in the cause of loyalty and obedience, you would meet with indomitable energy any and every enemy, however formidable his array—yet in another sense you are by no means free from that fear of man which our Lord here forbids. You do not fear your enemies, but you fear your friends and companions. You fear men because you do not fear God. You love the praise of men more than the praise of God; you dread the reproach of men more than the reproach of God. Many people who would be shocked at the barest insinuation of physical cowardice are absolutely the slaves of moral cowardice. Physical cowardice is the fear of those who kill the

body, moral cowardice is the fear of those who heap insult and shame upon the mind. Our Lord's words were not spoken in vain either to those who heard them or to many who have read them since. And let not their spirit be spoken in vain to you. For to you He says, *Fear not them who can trouble the mind by a few sarcasms and insults, and after that have no more than they can do; but I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear, fear Him whose Voice at the last great day will be to you a sound of shame and everlasting reproach, and who after He has thus roused in you the bitter recollection of your sins, has power to cast into hell, yea, I say unto you, fear Him.*

It comes, then, to this, my friends, that you must not allow yourselves to be laughed or talked into toleration of any sin, or neglect of any duty or any Christian habit. You must run with patience the race which is set before you, you must fulfil with diligence the work which God has given you to do, even the care of your own souls, without attending to the opinion of those who try to persuade you that there is no harm in this or that indulgence, no necessity for strictness in maintaining this or that principle or habit, although you are sure from the Bible and the warnings of conscience, that their words are opposed to the law of Christ. And lest you should say that it is the business of a Christian preacher not only barely and drily to tell you of your duty, but also to encourage you to perform it, I will in conclusion mention two or three helps by which, under God's blessing, you may be led to fear Him in whose hands are the issues of your eternal destiny, rather than those who can only vex and disturb you for a few short years. The first of these helps is friendship.

Two men, both earnestly desiring to fear God, may by brotherly intimacy and mutual support strengthen each other to do right, in cases where either by himself might succumb to a corrupt public opinion. A larger number of such friends furnish one another with a yet more abundant security: we set little store on the opinion of those whose principles are opposed to our own, when our conduct wins the sympathy and support of those who are trying like ourselves to be the servants of God.

A second help towards overcoming the fear of men will be found in endeavouring by all lawful means to conciliate it, and to show that the Holy Spirit of Christ makes us gentle, amiable, unselfish as well as strict in our principles and conduct. Let them see that we obey the warning not to *seek our own but every man another's wealth*. Let them see that Christ's Spirit has taught us to govern our tempers, to restrain our passions, to live for others rather than ourselves. Do not let them say that we are merely strict about certain outward things, such as the observance of Sunday, reading the Bible, attendance on public worship, and other means of grace, while our hearts are unchanged, and our conduct as to the daily concerns of life in no way improved. Above all, do not let them say that we are only strict in points in which we have no strong personal interest, but eager to please ourselves by indulging our own cherished inclinations. If you practise vices which are pleasant to you, and condemn those to which you have no inclination, the opposition to your principles will be not only increased but justified, hard words or ill-usage will be deserved as well as incurred. Recollect, therefore, that Christian principle must guide your whole life

and conduct; that those who seek for a share in the great Redemption which Christ purchased by His Blood, can never, at any time or in any place, plead exemption from His law.

Lastly, remember that warning which ought to be repeated at the end of every sermon: if you wish to do these things you must be careful to pray for them. Seek, brethren, for a strength better than your own. A man may feel himself as it were alone in the world; he may be unable to find any friend to help him by his sympathy, his example, his affection. Remember, then, that you have a Friend in Heaven who died for you once, but who lives for you always, that He may bring you to God. Seek, then, for the help of Jesus Christ in prayer. Approach Him without fear in reliance on His own gracious promises, and ask Him to raise you, by the gift of His own holy Spirit, above that fear of man which is to many of us the greatest of all temptations, and inspire you with that fear of God which is the beginning of wisdom. Pray to Him day by day, not only in appointed places and at definite times, but always; live in the habit of prayer, so that whenever you are disposed to obey man rather than God, you may remember to offer up to Christ a silent entreaty for His help and blessing. So will you rise even above the fear of God; for that, as we just said, is but the beginning of wisdom; you will begin to do your duty not from dread of His judgments, but from delight in His service, and so you will be filled with that perfect love which casteth out fear, and come forth from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the sons of God.

It seems rather an abrupt transition to pass from a warning against the fear of man to an exhortation that you should contribute to a charitable object. Yet my last sentence will connect the two subjects. This perfect love which casteth out fear, and of which I have just reminded you, must show itself in a readiness and zeal to benefit others; for *if a man say I love God and hateth* (i.e. loveth not) *his brother, he is a liar, for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?*

And therefore I am not doing violence to the general scope of this sermon in asking your contributions to an effort now making to extend to the Christian children of this presidency the benefits of a sound and religious education. There is a fitness, too, in appealing on their behalf to a military congregation in India, for much has been done by Lawrence Asylums and Regimental Schools for the education and improvement of soldiers' children. Let me urge you to extend this benefit to other classes also. Let us not rest till all the sons and daughters of our fellow-countrymen and fellow-Christians in this land are carefully trained by an education based on the fear of God. Let the warnings and promises of the Gospel be so interwoven with the earliest lessons of the young, and so shown forth in practice by the example of their teachers, that they may grow up useful men and women, and earnest devoted Christians, free from the base and degrading fear of one another, and trained through reverence and good habits, as well as mental culture, to desire above all things that knowledge which is life eternal, even the knowledge of the only true God, and of Jesus Christ whom He hath sent.

SERMON III.

SIMLA, 1860.

THE MESSAGE AND THE MESSENGERS.

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!—Isaiah, lii. 7.

THERE is no doubt of the original application of these words, nor of the legitimate extension and spiritual meaning of them, sanctioned not only by the general analogy of Scripture, but in this case by the direct authority of St. Paul. In their first sense they form a part of that great series of encouragement and consolation, in which the Prophet promises to Israel redemption from captivity and return from exile to Israel, and assures the chosen people of God that, though for a time deserted and forsaken, they shall yet be restored to the land given to their fathers, and the worship of God once more established on the heights of Mount Zion. *Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted His people, and will have mercy upon His afflicted. . . . the Lord will comfort Zion: He will comfort all her waste*

places; He will make her wilderness like Eden, and her desert like the garden of the Lord; joy and gladness shall be found therein, thanksgiving, and the voice of melody. . . . . Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the Holy City . . . . for thus saith the Lord, Ye have sold yourselves for nought, and ye shall be redeemed without money. . . . My people went down aforetime into Egypt to sojourn there; and the Assyrian oppressed them without cause. Now therefore, what have I here, saith the Lord, that my people is taken away for nought? they that rule over them make them to howl, saith the Lord; and my name continually every day is blasphemed. Therefore my people shall know my name: therefore they shall know in that day that I am He that doth speak: behold, it is I. And then follows the text: the announcement that across the mountains which bound Palestine through the north, and over *the hills which stand around Jerusalem*, shall come a messenger of good tidings and peace, announcing to Zion that her citizens shall be brought back from Assyria, and the foundations of the temple once more laid; that Israel shall be comforted, and Jerusalem redeemed; that the *Lord hath made bare His holy arm in the eyes of all the nations, and that all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God.*

But the Prophet, while thus describing in thrilling language the deliverance of his countrymen from bondage, rises to the contemplation of promises which far transcend the greatness of the most glorious earthly kingdom, and passes from the thought of Israel after the flesh, to the eternal, spiritual Israel, whose *people shall be all righteous, and inherit the land for ever*, the Church

of God, to which the blessed assurance is given: *Thy sun shall never go down, neither thy moon withdraw itself, for the Lord shall arise upon thee, and His glory shall be seen upon thee, and the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising.* So St. Paul takes up the same glorious theme by teaching the Romans that there shall be *no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon Him, for whosoever shall call upon the Lord shall be saved.* And then he goes on to argue that they cannot know how to call upon God unless they hear of God; that they cannot hear without a preacher, and that the preachers must *be sent, as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things.* Thus the Apostle appropriates and intensifies the aspirations of the Prophet; he shows how the deliverance of Israel from the bondage of Assyria typified and prefigured the deliverance of all men—whether belonging to the earthly Israel or not, whether born in the east or the west, in the north or in the south—from the yet more bitter slavery of sin; and that if a blessing from God followed the feet of the herald who proclaimed the temporal restoration of Zion and the glad tidings of political peace and liberty, far deeper and truer would be the blessing which would attend the footsteps of those who preached the good tidings of spiritual liberty, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding.

I do not think it fanciful, brethren, but rather, I trust, a lawful instance of the principle which would connect God's word with our ordinary life and occupations, and

the scenes and circumstances to which we are called from time to time, if I ask you to-day to give these words a particular application, and to think not of the mountains which encompass the earthly Zion, nor yet only of the great spiritual mountains of the Lord, on which Christ's Universal Church is set up, as a light to lighten the world, but of these mountains which are around us in this very place, and from which we are deriving every day so much health and vigour, and recreation and enjoyment. No one I think can go abroad into the magnificent scenes which are here within our reach, or traverse the rich valleys, the green hill sides, clothed with luxuriant flowers, the solemn forests of pines and cedars, or survey even from a distance the gigantic rampart of eternal snow, which shuts in the vast and varied prospect, without lamenting one great deficiency, through which this landscape differs from the mountain scenery of Europe. In the valleys of Westmoreland, or Scotland, or Switzerland, or Italy, the eye rests with hope and thankfulness on the spires, and towers, and campaniles of churches, as a proof that, amidst such profusion of physical beauty, the elements and foundation of moral beauty are not wholly wanting. In the villages and heights of the Himalayas, if any outward emblems remind the traveller that the people of the land acknowledge any form of religion, he is only warned of the utter degradation into which that religion has fallen by the sight of the repulsive symbol of Siva, or the hideous features of Hunamun or Devi. Nowhere else are heaven and earth so utterly separated, nowhere else is the contrast so striking between the grandeur of God's material creation, and the ruin of the human spirit

and conscience, the greatest and noblest work which His hands have made.

For this reason, I think that the duty of making known over these mountains the glad tidings of good things, and the prayer that this moral desert may be changed into the garden of the Lord, appeal very strongly to our imagination, as they certainly ought to do to our reason, and to our deeper and holier feelings of Christian faith and love. And those who have experience in the character of the natives of these hills testify that, if there are many difficulties in raising their moral and spiritual condition to the Christian standard, yet the work has also its special encouragements. It is true that they are ignorant, fanatical, and bigoted, and the missionary of a hill station,* at some distance from this, had some difficulty in persuading parents to allow him to teach in his school even the elements of geography, lest their orthodoxy should be perilled by studying a map of the world. But, on the other hand, they are said to be far more true, independent, honest, and manly than their countrymen and coreligionists in the plains, so that they have fewer moral impediments to acquiring the knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ whom He has sent. For we all know that evil habits are the great hindrances to a living faith. *How can ye believe*, says our Lord, *who seek honour one of another, and seek not the honour which cometh of God only?* And again, *No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me draw Him. He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore*

* Kotgur; in the neighbourhood of which there has since been established a system of village schools, now successfully carried on by a missionary of the C. M. S.

hear them not because ye are not of God. The seed which was not sown in the good ground of an honest and good heart sprang up only to be scorched, or choked, or devoured. We must all have experienced in our own hearts that the worst of all impediments to a real earnest belief in Christ, and an actual personal appropriation of His work to our own souls, arises from our own selfishness and sin, from the indulgence of evil tempers, the encouragement of unkind or angry feelings, and that we least appreciate Christ's doctrine when we are most indifferent to God's will. A simple, honest, hardy mountaineer, if a successful struggle can be maintained against his pride and prejudice and ignorance, is more likely to become a true member of Christ's Church, than a selfish, untruthful votary of pleasure, or money, or ambition. If we wish to see genuine Christianity in England, we must often seek it rather in the cottage of the poor than in the halls of the rich and prosperous; and when once a foundation is laid in these hills of elementary education, I should have more hope that a Christian Church might be built up among their villages, than in the great marts of commerce and godless civilisation, into which are gathered the teeming population of the plains. It is quite true, and was abundantly plain, from my own recent experience, that as yet hardly anything has been done in this neighbourhood, since indeed the first and most obvious requisite—of tolerably efficient schools, is not yet secured. Yet in asking for your help to promote the objects of this mission, I may remind you that it does not limit its operations to the country immediately around us here, that however unsatisfactory may be the present state of things at Kotgur, yet that at

Kangra, where the operations depend on the same funds, there is a good and largely attended school, and mission work vigorously carried on under a zealous and devoted minister of our church, while even at Kotgur a beginning has been made. For there is at least one instance there for which we may be deeply thankful, and which proves that faithful and unselfish work is never thrown away, of an educated Hindu, sprung from a noble Rajput stock, turning with his wife from the worship of idols to the love of Christ. This man maintains a consistent walk in the paths of Christian duty and obedience, and is anxious to take part, according to his power, in the great work of teaching his countrymen that they too are invited to come to Zion, and of publishing upon the mountains salvation and peace: so that a beginning at least has been made. Unless, however, we add our help and exertion, the work, humanly speaking, will stop with that beginning; and I may say (I hope without presumption) that my own recent visit to the mission has enabled me at least to suggest, to those who manage its temporal arrangements, plans by which it may be carried on more vigorously and more efficiently, and, if God's blessing rest upon our labours, bring forth in His own good time more abundant fruit to the glory of His Name.

I have called your attention to the claims of this mission for the sake of those among whom we are living, with whom we are so closely connected, on whom we are dependent for the supply of our daily wants and the performance of almost every ordinary service; who often render those services and supply those wants faithfully, patiently, and diligently, yet from whom we are separated by a barrier which nothing can remove

except the consciousness of a common Redemption, and the heartfelt belief in a common Saviour. But I would also urge upon you the duty of supporting it for your own good; and this not merely because by giving to India a Christian civilisation we are fulfilling the very highest of our national duties, and justifying our position as the occupiers and masters of a foreign country. Not that this is a trifling consideration. If we rejoice in the efforts which the Italians, for example, are now making to recover their place among free nations, while at the same time we quietly retain our position as the lords of Hindustan, we can only avert the charge of selfish inconsistency by proving that we have blessings to give which the Hindus at present cannot appreciate, but which are far more precious than even political and national liberty—nay, without which political and national liberty cannot be secure or permanent. But in now bringing to a close the ministry which I have exercised in this church during the last few months, I would rather speak to you of the good which by a deeper and more practical interest in this subject we may, by God's help, do to our own souls, with a distinct reference to our time spent in this place. Most certainly it has been to nearly all of us a time of real earthly happiness, of health preserved or restored, of freedom from much ordinary care and anxiety, of cheerful recreation and enjoyment. How each person has spent it individually, whether with a grateful recognition of God's lovingkindness in giving him these good things, and with an earnest effort to grow in goodness and true wisdom, or as a mere period of idleness to be spent in amusement and self-indulgence, and in inventing devices

to kill time or procure every day some new gratification, is known to God and to his own conscience alone. But in either case there is a very loud and urgent call upon us to care for others, to raise our thoughts and aspirations from earth to heaven, to remember *the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich.* If we are grateful to God for great and undeserved mercies, then let us show forth the praises of Him who is the Giver of all the good things which we have so richly enjoyed, let us learn and put into practice that commandment at once ever old and ever new, the end of all Christian teaching, the cardinal principle of the Gospel, that as *Christ loved us we ought also to love one another.* Let us show forth that love not merely to those who are near us in feeling, and education, and race, and religion, but to those who are far off also, far from the Church of Christ, and from the knowledge that God is their Father, and gave His Son for their redemption. Or if some self-reproach and regret mingles with our retrospect of the past; if we look back on mere earthly enjoyment rather than active endeavours to do our duty, and draw nearer and nearer to our Saviour; if we have to repent of folly, or vanity, or selfishness, in any of its manifold varieties, then let us remember that there is still time to seek for God's forgiveness, and to show that we desire it. Such penitence may well remind us that we, as Englishmen in India, as Christians living among unbelievers, as members of a conquering nation—entrusted with the welfare of a people rendered helpless by long years of slavery and idolatry, cannot be thoughtless and selfish without special sin; that

here, of all places, there is no room for heedless indifference to others, and forgetfulness of God, and unblest self-indulgence; for we must never rest till God's ancient promises are fulfilled in their widest and most heavenly significance; till India rises to bless and welcome the feet of those who bring good tidings upon her mountains and her plains; till God has made her *an eternal excellency, the joy of many generations*; till Christ is revealed as *her everlasting light, and the days of her mourning are ended.*

SERMON IV.

ST. GEORGE'S CATHEDRAL, MADRAS, 1863.

FAITH AND WORKS.

By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.—Eph. ii. 8-10.

THIS passage is one of singular importance and vital interest to the Church, because it absolutely exhausts a great theological dispute by which Christendom has in past times been distracted, and of which the echoes are still faintly heard—the great controversy between faith and works. Those eager disputants (for there have been such) who from time to time have urged upon us the paramount claims of faith, in language which seemed to obscure the necessity of personal sanctification, and, again, their opponents who have so exalted the duty of repentance, obedience, and good works as to overlook the foundation on which alone a holy life can be built, could scarcely have considered with adequate attention, thought, and prayer, the complete exposition of the Christian teaching on this subject which is contained

in these few lines of St. Paul. Nowhere is there a stronger example of that concentrated wisdom, which is one of the most wonderful characteristics of Holy Scripture, and through which a whole course of doctrine or practice is summed up in one or two pregnant sentences, so terse, so expressive, so conclusive, that if duly received into the heart and mind, they will guide a Christian with infallible certainty through the thorny paths of religious controversy or moral difficulty. Entire volumes of theological discussion are either included or refuted, and many assertions, seemingly contradictory, are reconciled in the text. Let us, then, dwell upon it in detail, and endeavour to understand both its separate parts and their connection, before we deduce from it certain inferences applying to the particular subject on which I have undertaken to speak to you to-day.

1. *By grace are ye saved.* More literally, *ye have been saved,* the act being accomplished already. *To be saved,* as we know, is commonly used in Scripture of those who by joining themselves to the Christian Church, *saved themselves from that untoward generation* which crucified the Lord of glory. It frequently refers not so much to our future perfect safety in heaven, as to our present comparative safety on earth, the security with which we contemplate the flood of worldly trouble, and passion, and wickedness, while we are borne over the swelling waters in the ark of Christ's Church. And here we are told that this salvation is wholly due to God. It was through His grace or favour, His election, His eternal purpose, that we were born in a Christian country, and brought to the knowledge of His Son. We must thank

the same Divine grace, and election, and purpose, if our hearts are truly converted to Him, and if we have made any progress in realising our privilege, and becoming Christ's disciples not in name only, but in deed and truth. You see, brethren, that we are already in the midst of words—election, grace, God's eternal purpose, which have been fiercely bandied hither and thither in religious disputation. Yet how simple are they, how practical, when they are used not in piling up theories and systems upon Scripture, but in explaining its lessons. All that we are, whatever of good is in us, our spiritual privileges and blessings, our best and holiest feelings are due to God, who is the one Spirit of all good. I am sure that no really humble and devout Christian will for a moment gainsay this statement. Whether he opened his heart in childhood to the watchful training of pious parents, and has grown up from the first mindful of his baptismal covenant; whether in maturer years he has been gradually led to see the misery of sin, and through much painful thought and careful watchfulness and prayer, ever increasing in earnestness, to acknowledge the glory of his Christian calling; or whether, by some sudden change of circumstances or feelings or convictions he has been all at once converted, justified, and saved—still he knows that this great blessing has been bestowed upon him, not worked out or deserved by him, that a higher power than his has brought it to pass, that in no case has he delivered himself from the bondage of sin, but that *by grace he has been saved*: it was God's doing, and not his own.

II. But though the blessing is God's, it is not given capriciously or in the spirit of arbitrary wantonness

which too often marks the bestowal of human favour. *I am God and not man*, said the Most High, by the mouth of His prophet. He is not swayed by human passion or caprice, nor again does He distribute His various gifts of grace among the thankless, the slothful, the perverse. The seed must fall on good ground. The word of God must be received into an honest and good heart. Man must be willing to accept and use the blessings which his Heavenly Father offers. *By grace have ye been saved through faith.* Faith is the instrument or hand by which we grasp the Divine treasure. It is the capacity for accepting the gifts which are poured into our souls from heaven. Thus grace is equivalent to the Divine love which imparts, faith to the human love which receives. If there is no faith in a man's heart, Divine grace is shed forth in vain, just as the seed failed to produce fruit by the way-side, or on the rock, or when choked by thorns. And this faith or receiving love is plainly not the intellectual belief in a certain system of doctrine, not the matured assent of the Christian understanding to the whole revelation of God, but a spiritual and moral feeling, consisting in a deep conviction of the heinousness of sin, and of Jesus Christ's loving readiness to deliver us from its power and from its penalty. This is the faith, this is the honest and good, that is, the humble, candid, trusting heart, which accepts the grace of God, and thereby brings us into the state of salvation which Christ has won for mankind.

III. The Apostle adds a further warning that we must not attribute this happiness to ourselves: *By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.* Again, we are reminded that this sal-

vation which we have attained is God's free gift; not procured by us, not deserved by us: *not of yourselves*, he says, *God's is the gift.* And so he lays the foundation of all that follows on the firm basis of meekness, humility, self-renunciation, and the childlike spirit which trusts our Father's love and obeys our Father's will.

IV. He then first introduces distinctly the mention of a possible rival, which may seek to wrest the dominion of our hearts from the faith which accepts God's grace in simplicity and godly sincerity. *Not of works*, he adds, lest *any man should boast.* We are not to imagine that we have saved ourselves. If we do, the salt will lose its savour, any moral progress which we have made, any good which we may have effected, any benefits which we have bestowed on others, any exertions or offerings which we make for the improvement of those around us, will lose all their inward value, because they will be defiled by the master-sin of pride. Surely the truth of this is illustrated in the ordinary intercourse of human society. A man may have many great and excellent gifts, he may be clever, accomplished, learned, energetic, active in promoting schemes of usefulness, devoted to the duties to which God's Providence has called him. Still, if he is vain, conceited, and self-conscious, if he takes an obvious pleasure in exhibiting his own abilities, and boasting of his own exploits, we turn away from him with repugnance. Mental or moral power only displays its true charms when it is accompanied by modesty. And this principle, which thus adds grace and beauty to the virtue and accomplishments of daily life, it has pleased God in His perfect wisdom to establish as the very foundation of Chris-

tianity. He resolved to exclude from the heart of every true disciple of His Son all boasting and self-righteousness: His revelation was fitted to produce that character which even the world would acknowledge as most admirable and attractive, and which therefore would be most likely by the persuasive evidence of example and influence to win souls to Christ. And thus the maxim *not of works lest any man should boast* is to be received as a cardinal principle of the Gospel.

V. But although our works have no part in procuring that salvation which is bestowed by God's grace upon the faith of him whose conscience is roused to a sense of sin, yet they are all important in the Christian scheme. They are the end and object for which God sent His Son into the world. *For ye are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works.* Jesus Christ came into the world, and lived in it for more than thirty years, and taught His disciples, and died upon the Cross, and rose again from the grave, in order that we might be holy. So says St. Paul in another place: *Christ gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* I entreat you, brethren, to observe the exact turn of the Apostle's language both in the text and in the passage just quoted. Many of us are too apt to throw the whole effect of Christ's salvation into the distant future, to believe that He died merely that we might be forgiven at the judgment day, and saved from the pains of hell. Doubtless He has *brought life and immortality to light*, He has restored us to the everlasting love and blessing of the Father, He has opened the kingdom of heaven

to all believers. But we shall miss the truth of the Gospel altogether, we shall be in danger of forfeiting our share in His salvation if we dwell chiefly or exclusively on its distant consequences. We cannot separate heaven from holiness, the blessings of the next life from the duties of this. The immediate and primary object of Christ's Revelation is that we might be created anew unto good works. "He died that we might be a peculiar people—that is, a people unlike the men of this world, not acting on worldly maxims, not studying self-interest, but guided by new principles, so different from those which are commonly in vogue that they may appear to some persons foolish and eccentric—*zealous of good works.* This was the final cause of each man's calling, and regeneration, and conversion to God; for this object the Holy Spirit visits the soul of every true Christian and seeks to fashion it according to the likeness of Christ. Let us all bear deeply imprinted on our remembrance when we are communing with God and our own hearts in secret, when we are reading our Bible, when we are carrying on our common intercourse with others, when we are engaged in religious discussion, when we are exhorting or receiving exhortation, that the object of the whole Christian scheme is holiness, the goal to which Christ leads us in the doing of good works.

VI. But the text contains one clause more, calculated to enhance the dignity of this object which our Lord has set before us. We are *created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.* Here we are taught that our opportunities of holiness, the course of right conduct which is open to each of us, the path in which each may most

safely walk during this life's pilgrimage, were all prepared and laid down for us in our Father's love and wisdom. It is not through haphazard that any man is called to any particular duties: we are what we are and where we are by God's appointment, except indeed so far as we have marred His work and deranged His purposes by our own perversity and sin. As God created the trees for the sake of the fruits which they should bear, and assigned to each tree beforehand a special form and hue and flavour of fruit, and a special time of bearing, so before God created us anew in Christ Jesus, He endued each with his own disposition and natural character, prepared for each his peculiar opportunities, assigned to each difficulties which he would be required to overcome, and opened to each a special field of duty and of trial. Thus we see yet more clearly than before that the power and the will to do good works is not the cause of our salvation but a part of it: we are forgiven and accepted in Christ, not because we have done good works, but in order that we may do them; holiness, active usefulness, brotherly love, mutual help, are to be reckoned among the blessings of our redemption. Let no man, then, complain of his peculiar lot in life, except so far as it results from his own folly or wickedness, and then let his complaints take the form of that *godly sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of.* Let no man think his temptations irresistible, his difficulties insuperable. Without a struggle there can be no high and heroic excellence even in the estimation of this world, far less any true Christian holiness, such as God for His Son's sake regards with approving love. Good works would cease to be good if they required no self-

discipline and self-control. God will judge our works at the end according to our opportunities, and with a merciful consideration of our disadvantages; the servant which knew his Lord's will and did it not shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. Let each honestly do his utmost as a Christian man, use faithfully the grace which God bestows upon His people, regard his new creation in Christ Jesus as a reality, and, starting from that point as from an unfailing source of spiritual strength and holy resolution, devote himself heartily to a life of Christian duty and active usefulness, to the performance of good works.

My brethren, it is feared by some that in this country, since the great convulsion which shook the foundation of our empire six years ago, there has been a diminution rather than an increase of good works, arising from a lessened interest in its welfare, from the loosening of those ties which formerly bound Englishmen to India, and also from incidental causes not necessarily connected, though contemporaneous with it. Now, I am sure that, apart from all special arguments, the words of the Apostle now before us should convince us that any such cessation of active exertion for the good of the country is thoroughly wrong and unchristian. It is not a mere question of Indian history, or of our temporary position, or of mistakes in policy, or of national crimes, or of any local circumstances. Above and before all incidental considerations towers the great fact that we are Christians, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, bound therefore to do our duty faithfully, to

serve our fellow-men actively, to seek to win souls for Christ zealously wherever we are. Whatever are the good works which require to be done around us, they have been ordained and appointed for us by God. He has placed us in India, therefore we must serve India, not merely by the half-hearted performance of the duties of our several callings (for this requires no higher motive than the most ordinary integrity, and even this in no very high degree) but by a living interest in all plans which are carefully formed for the welfare of this land, and of the various classes and races by which it is inhabited, and by an earnest self-denying resolution to help all who cannot help themselves, resulting in the active, liberal, hearty performance of good works.

It is to one of the special good works, my brethren, which are here incumbent upon all who feel the blessing of Christian redemption, and the solemn obligations of their new creation by God in Christ Jesus, that I have been requested to call your attention to-day. I commend, then, to your support an institution, with which the welfare of this diocese, and of a very large proportion of its European and Eurasian inhabitants is vitally and intimately bound up. It has been said that Christ has assigned to His Church four main duties, that He has prepared for it four special good works which its members should promote by their united efforts. These are: 1. The relief of temporal suffering; 2. The education of the young; 3. The conversion of the heathen; 4. The supply of the spiritual wants of the poor, the helpless, and the ignorant. Now, without presuming to say that of four works, all good, and holy, and acceptable to God, one is more important than the other, I

am quite sure that in India at least, the last of these is most apt to be neglected. For there is in it less of that romantic and enthusiastic element which stirs up many to ardour in the support of missions, and less of that direct and piercing appeal to our natural feeling and affections which prompts us at once without question to save the poor from starvation, or the young from perishing for lack of knowledge.

And you must suffer me, brethren, in all kindness, but in all sincerity, to say that there are symptoms which show that the guilt of neglecting this duty here, is only too likely to be incurred. The branch of the Colonial and Continental Church Society which is here established undertakes to provide for the special wants of those European and Eurasian Christians who are scattered over the wide extent of the Presidency, in groups too small to claim the services of a Government Chaplain, and who therefore, unless cared for by the willing zeal and carefulness of the whole church, will be absolutely neglected. I can conceive no duty more imperative than the maintenance of such a holy work. Especially is it incumbent on the residents in this city, where the ministrations of the Church are freely supplied without money and without price. And yet I deeply grieve to read in the last report of the Society that its annual expenditure exceeds its income by no less a sum than 3,547 rupees.

Wipe away, my brethren, I beseech you, at once this reproach from the diocese. Only think how disastrous must be the consequences if a large number of the nominally Christian population of the Presidency grows up without those helps to self-control and practical

holiness which are furnished by the ordinances of religion. What a disgrace to the English and the Christian name, what a triumph to the enemies of the Cross of Christ, what a hindrance to missionary labour! Is not the mere sight of Christ's Church, in its purity and integrity that is, of a great society of men and women living in an atmosphere of prayer and holiness and practical benevolence, intended to be the strongest of all possible arguments, whereby gainsayers shall be convinced and immortal souls converted to the love of Christ crucified? Does not the opposite spectacle to this, the sight of a generation calling themselves by Christ's name, but in works denying Him, supply unbelievers with the most plausible or at least the most practical and telling argument for asserting that the Gospel is a delusion? We must not indeed rest the duty of furnishing our countrymen with these religious ordinances solely on the effect which the sight of a godly society produces on the heathen. We must think also of the souls of those who are without such ordinances, of many simple or froward hearts who are in deep need of wise counsel in life and Christian consolation in death. And so we read with deep regret that the Society for lack of funds has actually been obliged to withdraw its aid from places which it once occupied, and has deserted even the district of the Wynaad, which seems destined more than any place between the Himalayas and Cape Comorin to be the nucleus of a new England in India. Do not, I beseech you, my brethren, suffer this great evil to continue. Do not let your countrymen live and die without the blessing of Christ's ordinances. Do not let a colony grow up

amongst you in forgetfulness of God; for if you do, be well assured that your missionary efforts will be vain, and the day when India stretches out her hands to God will be indefinitely delayed.

But, in leaving the subject, we must not confine our thoughts and efforts to this one duty. The solemn warnings of the text are not fulfilled by subscribing, however munificently, to any special object. The good works which God has prepared for us to walk in rest on deeper and broader foundations than this. Let us, then, look well into our own hearts and lives. Let us remember that a life unstained by dishonour, by impurity, by selfishness or any sin, is the true goal of every Christian. Let us remember that when the Apostle teaches us that God *was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself*, he straightway warns us not to *receive this grace in vain*, and enumerates, as the signs of its influence on the heart, *pureness, knowledge, longsuffering, kindness, the Holy Ghost, love unfeigned, the word of truth, the power of God, the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left.* Let all members of the Church, whether ministers or laymen, seek to abound in these signs of grace; and then there is no fear that our interest in India will flag, or good institutions languish, or that we shall neglect either the poor or young, or the heathen, or helpless and ignorant Christians; we shall feel, and know, and prove by our conduct, that we are not living for ourselves, but *for Him who died for us and rose again.*

SERMON V.

BOMBAY CATHEDRAL, 1863.

THE GOSPEL AND THE CHURCH.

The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.—Gal. ii. 20.

Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it.—Ephes. v. 25.

It is an old remark that half the error in the world originates from allowing the mind to dwell exclusively on some one truth, without reference to the other truths which are intended to balance, to limit, and to define it. One of the greatest of philosophical divines said of persons who had adopted heretical opinions: 'Their fault is not that they have followed a falsehood, but that they have followed one truth to the exclusion of another. There are a great number of truths of revelation, and also of natural religion, and ethics which seem opposed to one another, but which really all coexist in a wonderful order.' Without saying that the two passages which I have brought together as my text are opposed to each other—which they certainly are not, yet we shall observe that they bring before us two sides of Christian truth, they remind us of two doctrines which are both in the highest degree important, nay,

rather essential for the 'perfect man of God.' Neither gives us in itself a complete view of Christ's Gospel; and therefore either, dwelt upon alone, may lead the Christian into error, or at least into an imperfect appreciation of the blessings which his Lord has bestowed upon him, and of the duties which He expects him to fulfil. We will dwell for a short time upon each passage separately, show what each teaches and what it omits; and then bring both together, and endeavour to learn how, by taking them in their combination, we may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

Each passage, then, puts before us a reason for Christ's death. Both, you will observe, were written by the same Apostle, and therefore show us how at one time his mind turned with devout thankfulness to one of these reasons, and at another time to the other. *Christ loved me and gave Himself for me. Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it.* In the former passage the thoughts of the Christian are turned to himself and his individual separate duties; in the latter to his brethren, his duties towards them, and the helps which he derives from his union with them. Of the two, it is probable that the former first lays hold of a heart which is truly converted to God, and which acknowledges to itself the deep reality of Christ's Redemption, the meaning and blessing of His death. The former, therefore, is the one which we shall naturally first consider to-day.

The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. The first anxiety of the awakened sinner must be for his own soul: Am I permanently alienated from God? Is there any hope for me, any forgiveness, or have my

sins excluded me for ever from the favour of One who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity? This is the question of questions: Can I be personally, individually united to God, restored to the love and blessing of Him whom I feel by an uncontrollable and divinely-implanted instinct to be my Father; but from whom I fear, through the tormenting accusations of an uneasy conscience, that I am separated by my perverse rebellion—just as the prodigal in the parable scarcely ventured to ask for pardon, even though he had turned his face homewards, but could only cry, *Father, I have sinned against heaven and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son*? Now, this tremendous question, on which depend the issues of eternal life and eternal death, in the answer to which are involved all true happiness and active holiness in this world, all hope in the world to come, is solved in the former portion of our text. *The Son of God loved me, and gave Himself for me.* When each man is thoroughly, spiritually, practically convinced of the love of Christ, and resolves by God's grace to embrace it with his whole heart and mind, then his new life of faith begins. *The life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God.* The force of the passage would be brought out more clearly, and the original more exactly rendered, if we made one change, almost the slightest possible, in our translation, and read, *the life which I now live in the flesh I live in the faith of the Son of God.* The Christian is still living in the flesh, surrounded with earthly objects and temptations, necessarily much occupied in this world's business, and bound carefully and conscientiously to discharge this world's duties. But though he lives in

the flesh, yet he cannot regard this life, such as it is, which is going on within him and around him, as his truest and highest life: it is but a covering, as it were, and outward form, which conceals his real life: that better life is merged in Christ Himself, who lives within him by His Spirit, and quickens all the motives of his actions and the inmost depths of his character, so that from this external fleshly life, as from a chrysalis, the life of faith will at last spring forth and show itself in its full blessedness and glory. Doubtless, brethren, there are but few who can as yet repeat and apply to themselves the Apostle's words, and claim to be so living in the faith of the Son of God, that their fleshly or worldly life is as it were a mere shell covering their spiritual life; but yet this is the state at which we must all be aiming, which we must seek to realise and set before us as the ideal of our Christian calling. It is the present form and foretaste of that life eternal which actually consists in the knowledge of the Father, as the only true God, and of Jesus Christ whom He hath sent. And all who name the Name of Christ in sincerity and truth, all who by God's grace have risen beyond a mere outward profession of the Gospel, must feel the personal application of the words which follow, *Christ loved me and gave Himself for me.* For this in truth is the very beginning and foundation of real Christianity, the individual appropriating consciousness of Redemption: each man must feel his own separate responsibility to God, each man must *bear his own burthen* and be grieved and conscience-stricken by his own sins, and each must also feel that Jesus Christ is his own Saviour, that He died for him, not only for all mankind, but for him, the individual

sinner, who is standing alone with God, and knows that nothing can save him from the deserved penalties of sin, except the precious blood of Christ, poured out upon the Cross for his salvation.

This, then, as we have said, is the foundation. But when the life of faith has begun, and the awakened sinner realises more truly the blessedness of his position as a child of God no longer the mere slave of sin, but redeemed from it by Christ, forgiven and *accepted in the Beloved*, conscious of new and holier impulses and of increasing ability to follow them, then he also understands that the blessings of the Gospel do not merely consist in his own individual reconciliation with God, and the work of the Holy Spirit on his own soul. He looks around him, and whereas he may have been before so absorbed in the discovery of his own danger and his own merciful preservation, that he felt, as it were, a solitary unit in creation, standing face to face with God, his thoughts now turn to the multitude of his brethren, sinners like himself, whom the Son of God has saved by the same wonderful Redemption. He finds that he is one of many believers, brought together into a great society by the consciousness that they are all children of one Father, united into one family and household under the headship of the same elder brother, partakers of the same faith, the same promises, the same means of access to God. *Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it.* He died, not that He might only redeem from sin and death divers scattered and individual souls, but that each of His redeemed people might help and strengthen His brethren, and that all might be urged forward in their Christian course by mutual example

and exhortation and comfort and by sharing means of grace common to all, and dependent in a great degree for their efficacy on co-operation and love. Thus in another sense he will find it true that *the life which he now lives in the flesh he lives in the faith of the Son of God.* For his feelings towards those around him, the men and women whom he meets day by day, sharers in his business or his recreations, will be changed and transfigured when he regards them no longer merely as members of an earthly society or kingdom, but as forming *the Church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood.* He will desire to seek His own good in their good, He will regard the sacred bond which unites Him with them, as far exceeding in strength and efficacy the petty causes of disunion, rivalries, jealousies, collisions in the pursuit of earthly gain, which tend to separation. He will seek to make Christ's love for the Church the measure of his own. He will be ready, as his Saviour was, both to labour and to suffer for his brethren. He will perceive that such a body must be bound together by something of an external organisation, that there can be no cohesion in a spiritual, any more than in a secular, community if every member of it follows his own individual fancy, and therefore he will be faithful and loyal to that branch of the Universal Church in which he has been placed by God's Providence, or led by his own convictions and the teaching of God's Spirit. Thus He will value more and more the various means of communion by which Christ unites all members of the Church to one another, and thereby to Himself. It is worth while to follow the Apostle's exhortation, for it at once reminds us of some of these, and also of the end

which our Lord had placed before Him when He gave Himself for the Church which He loved. *Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.* Our thoughts are here turned first to the Sacraments, to those influences of the Holy Spirit of which the baptismal water is the pledge and the sign, and therefore also, by legitimate inference, to that other Sacrament which typifies and strengthens our union with each other, and with our Lord. We are reminded next of the Word of God, the Gospel not only thought and prayed over in the privacy of the closet, but read and preached in the great congregation, with its Divine power to instruct, to convert, and to edify. And we are taught that the end and object of all the blessings with which Christ has girt us round, above all, of the death which He endured for each individual sinner and for the whole Church, is our sanctification, that at the last great day He might have the joy of presenting the Church to Himself as a spotless bride, *holy and without blemish.* And thus we feel a new motive for love to our brethren, the wish to carry on the gracious purpose of Him who has done such great things for us. He resolves to present to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, and He has left in a great measure to the members of His Church, now in an imperfect yet progressive state, the duty of fulfilling His desire. He has not instituted upon earth a selfish, individual, isolating religion, separating man from man, nation from

nation, and age from age, but one which is to extend and propagate itself through all nations and all ages, by the common efforts of those who receive it. We are to help our brethren; we are to build up the Church and to enlarge its borders; we are to continue, whilst our Lord is absent from us, His holy and merciful design; we are to labour, each in his station and according to his opportunities, to prepare the Church for that day when it is to be presented in glory to the heavenly Bridegroom. Therefore, it is not enough to pray to God for ourselves, to seek for His grace in our own hearts, to avoid sin, to check evil thoughts as they arise within us, to deliver our own souls, to flee individually from God's anger, to be content if we can avert from ourselves the punishment which He has denounced against evil doers; ours must be a nobler, a loftier view of duty, a more expansive and social Christianity, a life of love, of mutual help, of active and self-denying service. *Christ loved the Church*: we must love it also, and value it, and use the helps and means of grace which are offered through its institutions and ministrations. *He gave Himself for it*: we, too, must be ready also, if need be, to give ourselves for it, to spend and be spent in the service of Him who died for us. *He that loveth his brother abideth in light: hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.* And now, my friends, is it not plain that he who wishes to do the will of God from the heart, to fulfil it perfectly, and to realise completely his own Christian privileges and blessings, must keep his mind, as St. Paul did, fixed upon both these comforting doctrines, and use both for his growth

in grace and spiritual progress? And yet too often they have been treated, not as mutually supplying and completing each other, but as opposed to each other: some men have dwelt on their own individual salvation till they have forgotten their duties to their brethren; some have been so absorbed by their membership in the great society which Christ has founded upon earth, that they have overlooked the discipline of their own souls, and have forgotten that the source of all true religion is in the heart, that conversion means the conscious turning of the will and affections to Christ, that before all things *the kingdom of God is within us.* The Gospel and the Church—the two great blessings which our Lord has left His people to keep alive their faith and hope and love while He is away from them—have sometimes been turned into the watchwords of separate parties, symbols of separation rather than of love. Yet surely as he is truly evangelical who can say from his heart, *Christ loved me and gave Himself for me,* and as he is a true churchman who believes and lives in the belief that *Christ loved the Church and gave Himself for it,* so he is a truly evangelical churchman, and therefore a real Christian in the highest and fullest sense, who acts upon both these truths in their due combination and just proportions. Such an one having fled from the wrath to come, and sought in Jesus Christ that peace which the world cannot give, unites heartily with his Christian brethren in the blessed work which the Saviour began, of holding up the weak, healing the sick, binding up the broken, bringing again the outcasts, seeking the lost; and he seeks to strengthen his union with his fellow-believers, and to fit himself for a life of active and self-denying love, by

heartily valuing and diligently using all the ordinances which the Church adminsters, by listening to its teaching, thankfully accepting its order, believing that the Holy Spirit is in the midst of Christ's people, and that the Lord's promises have not failed. For these promises are very frequent and very rich in blessing. *Where two or three are gathered together in my Name there am I in the midst of them. So I am with you always, even to the end of the world. Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, that ye should show forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvellous light. I saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.* You see, my brethren, that there is a great similarity between all these passages of God's Word; the same promises are given, the same duties are taught, we are invited to the same connection with Christ, and the same end and purpose of our labours is set before us in them all. Prayer and the promise that God will hear it, Christ with us always even unto the end of the world, the Church chosen, redeemed, and sanctified in order that the holiness of its members may abound to the glory of God, and finally the presentation of the bride to the Husband, the holy city displayed in all the perfection of its beauty—such are the duties, helps, objects, and blessings which the Lord and His apostles hold out to us; when they teach us that *He loved the Church and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.*

His aim, as we have seen, was to *redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto Himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.* And therefore, brethren, this disciple of Christ whom we have supposed to hold, in their integrity, the two doctrines which I have combined in my text, this evangelical churchman as I have ventured to call him, this Christian man who has perceived the full theory and true principles of the religion which he professes, will in this respect also accurately catch the spirit of our Lord's teaching. His churchmanship will not concern itself chiefly with outward things: he will always look beyond the visible form of ordinances and institutions to their inner meaning and power; his aim will be to worship the Father in spirit and in truth; he will regard himself and all his fellow-Christians *as created in Christ Jesus unto good works*; his end and aim in following an external order will be to promote among men an inner spirit of piety and devotion, willing self-denial, and an active charity. And surely, brethren, though I do not think it a good habit to dwell with self-complacency on the perfection of our own institutions, lest haply we be inclined to say to others who do not share them *I am holier than thou*; yet, without any risk of an arrogant or narrow spirit, I may ask you to rejoice in the fact that the Prayer Book and many other institutions of our own English communion are eminently calculated by God's blessing to foster in us this combined reverence for the Gospel and the Church, which St. Paul puts before us in the two passages of the text. And if we look back at the long roll of saints and worthies who have adorned its annals from the Reformation to the present day, we shall find that the best among them

were always distinguished for this happy combination—this union of a deep, personal, inward communion with God, and a devoted attachment to all those institutions by which our brethren are kept together in a hearty obedience to their Saviour. Let us then, brethren, who have inherited the prayers and thanksgiving and other services in which they poured out their hearts to God, the outward forms of worship and ritual by which they were bound to one another, seek yet more earnestly to share their spirit; let each of us *work out his own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who worketh in each both to will and to do,* and, while we embrace His gospel and follow it in our lives, let us always remember as an essential part of its glad tidings, that Christ is the *head over all things, to the Church which is His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.*

SERMON VI.

COLOMBO, 1863.

THE DEATH ON PISGAH.

And the Lord said unto Moses, This is the land which I sware unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, saying, I will give it unto thy seed: I have caused thee to see it with thine eyes, but thou shalt not go over thither. So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord.—Deut. xxxiv. 4, 5.

THUS ended the life of one of the greatest and holiest among the Saints of God. Thus died Moses, than whom no patriot ever wrought greater things for his countrymen, than whom no servant of the Most High ever devoted himself more heartily, more meekly, with more entire self-sacrifice to the work of building up God's kingdom among men. The great task which had been set before him, that of establishing his nation in the land of promise, was on the eve of accomplishment, the border of the inheritance was reached, the hosts of Israel were ready to 'pass over this Jordan, to go in to possess the land,' when the conquest was for a while delayed by the death of the leader. Instead of placing himself at the head of the host and guiding them through the river as he had years before led them

through the Red Sea, *Moses went up from the plains of Moab* (which, as you will remember, are on the east or left hand side of Jordan), *unto the mountain of Nebo, to the top of Pisgah. . . . And the Lord showed him all the land of Gilead, unto Dan, and all Naphtali, and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost* (that is, the Mediterranean) *sea, and the south, and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm trees, unto Zoar.* He was to see it, but he was not to go thither, but was to *die in the mount whither he went up and to be gathered to his people . . . because he had trespassed against God among the children of Israel, at the waters of Meribah Kadesh, and had not sanctified* (that is, openly acknowledged and magnified) *Him in the midst of the people. So he was to see the land before him, but was not to go thither unto the land which God had given to the children of Israel.*

It is not my intention to-day to dwell on the reason for this Divine prohibition, and on the sin for which Moses was excluded from the actual possession of the promised land. I rather desire to notice the fact itself, to speak to you first of the greatness of the disappointment, next of the spirit in which Moses submitted to it, and finally to draw from this a particular lesson for ourselves, with reference to the special subject of Christian missions which I have undertaken to bring before you to-day.

First, then, reflect on the bitterness of the disappointment, on the severity of the penalty. Look back for a moment on the past life of the great Prophet and Lawgiver. The goodly child, '*exceeding fair*' as he is called in the speech of the Martyr Stephen, rescued so

wonderfully from the death which was intended for all the infants of his nation, was trained for his future career amidst a diversity of influences, all tending to the one great end. First, he had experience of the world, by dwelling at the court of Pharaoh in the midst of the splendours of Egypt; and then, after proving that the love of his brethren was ardent within him, by slaying the foreigner who had wronged a Hebrew, he retired to the wide desert on the slopes of the mountains, so that by converse with men and with nature alike he was fitted to listen to the Voice by which the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, summoned him to be the liberator and lawgiver of His people. From those wild solitudes he returned to the midst of his brethren, and withstood the fury of their persecutor, and at their head he *forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king, for he endured as seeing by faith Him who is invisible.* Then for forty years he led them through the wilderness, bearing with all their ingratitude and perversity; and through him God revealed to them that holy law, *the shadow of good things to come*, of which, according to Jesus Christ's own sure word, *not one jot or one tittle shall pass away till all be fulfilled.* And now, at the time recorded in the text, the end of all these labours was at hand; the establishment of Jacob's wandering descendants as a settled nation in the land flowing with milk and honey was about to be accomplished; the two last wars with the neighbouring nations were over, Sihon king of the Amorites had been subdued, and the rock fortress of Og the king of Bashan had been captured. The two tribes of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh had already received their allot-

ments of land to the east of Jordan. Nothing remained but to cross the river, and win the promised inheritance. Though Moses was of the great age of one hundred and twenty years, *yet his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated*; he might have completed the work which he had so gloriously begun. But he was not permitted to do so. A single bird's-eye view over the whole land of promise, one of those wide prospects for which, as all travellers tell us, Palestine is so especially remarkable, was granted to him from the top of Pisgah, a height of the mountains of Nebo; and then he was summoned in mysterious solitude to yield up his spirit to God who gave it, to follow Miriam his sister, and Aaron his brother; and, though the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days, yet even the place of his burial was unknown to them, no provision was made for any permanent memorial of his death, nor was any posthumous honour paid to his remains: he sank to rest in some unknown recess of the mighty hills, and there awaits the resurrection of the just.

Such, then, brethren, was the death of Moses, such was the stern yet living retribution inflicted on him for having once exalted himself and forgotten God. Now let us notice the spirit in which he met the penalty, the manner in which he made preparation for the great change, which through his departure was coming upon his people. Let us observe how he overcame and forgot the personal disappointment, how steadily and faithfully he looked forward to the future destinies of his countrymen, though he himself was to die and not to be permitted to share them. We must all, in our own experience, have felt how great a disappointment it is even

in trifles to be prevented from completing a work which we have begun, especially a good work, and one which we hope may be useful to others. Many of us have probably given way too often to an unworthy jealousy, when others reap credit to which we think ourselves entitled. It seems harder to us than almost any other disappointment. Riches, dignity, worldly prosperity in all its forms we know to be transient and uncertain; but the honour due to us for doing good, for accomplishing some really important object, this at least, we think, is a reward to which we are entitled to look forward, a mere matter of right and justice. How unfair it seems that we should *labour and another enter into our labours*.. It would be positively wrong, we think, to contribute to such a result. If our services are no longer valued, we must withdraw them altogether. In simple justice to ourselves we cannot allow our knowledge and experience to conduce to results in which we have no share.

Such, brethren, is the natural expression of our feelings; such is the specious form in which we try to disguise our jealousy and vanity and desire of applause, by appeals to the supposed claims of right and justice. We do not remember that it is of little consequence whether we or others are the persons to carry out God's gracious purposes, provided that by some means they are accomplished at last. Now, contrast with this petty self-assertion, the manner in which Moses, with the knowledge of his coming end clearly revealed to him, aware that he would have no share in the final glory attending the completion of his great work—that while he had fought the battle others would reap the triumph, still

patiently and faithfully worked for the future, and helped others to enjoy that great sight which was to be hidden from his own eyes. The last days of his glorious life were spent in counselling, in encouraging, and in preparing the people and his successor for the final fulfilment of God's purposes. *The Lord hath said unto me,* such were some of his parting words to his countrymen, *Thou shalt not go over this Jordan. The Lord thy God, He will go over before thee, and He will destroy these nations from before thee, and thou shalt possess them: and Joshua, he shall go over with thee, as the Lord hath said. And the Lord shall do unto them as He did to Sihon and to Og, kings of the Amorites, and unto the land of them, whom He destroyed. And the Lord shall give them up before your face, that ye may do unto them according unto all the commandments which I have commanded you. Be strong and of good courage, fear not, nor be afraid of them: for the Lord thy God, He it is that doth go with thee; He will not fail thee, nor forsake thee.* Then to Joshua he solemnly commits the work, laying his hands on him and blessing him, and filling him with the spirit of wisdom. And so, certain that the Divine promise would not fail and come to nought, he peacefully sinks to rest, caring to the last for God's work, and not for his own success or glory, working for the future and not for the present, for the cause of truth and righteousness for his brethren and posterity, and not for himself.

Now, there can be no doubt that this is the spirit in which we also ought to carry on every good work. God has given to each of us something to be done for Him, some means of promoting His glory. It may be that we shall not ourselves see the fruit of our labours. Others

may obtain the honour of effecting some great object, for which we may have laboured patiently before they took it in hand. Or possibly the success of our undertakings may not be accomplished in our time. We may sow and others may reap. But what of this, if we believe in God's promises, and patiently work in accordance with His command? Doubtless if the good of others is only a secondary object with us, while our first desire is to gratify our own vanity or ambition, then we shall not care for objects whose accomplishment is possibly far distant; we shall work for the present and not for the future. But this is hardly consistent, brethren, with our Christian profession. We believe that the word of the Lord is sure, and shall not return to Him void. We are disciples of a Saviour who sought not His glory, but *humbled Himself* for the sake of His brethren, *and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross.* Surely, then, we shall look forward in faith and hope to a future which though certain may be remote; we shall do what we know to be right without being over-anxious for immediate results, and we shall labour in the field where God has placed us, beseeching Him for His Son's sake to accept our imperfect services, and not anxious for the immediate accomplishment of our purposes, for *one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day.*

And now, my brethren, you will have no difficulty in perceiving how directly the example of the great lawgiver furnishes us with a pattern in dealing with Christian missions. I can scarcely conceive it possible that any Christian, at once thoughtful and earnest, should not think it an essential duty of Englishmen in a heathen country to propagate Christianity among its inhabitants.

I do not mean—far from it—that this is the duty of the Government; but every individual Christian man in this island, in virtue of his baptismal obligation, must feel himself bound to bear some part in obeying his Saviour's command to *preach the Gospel to every creature*, and above all to a fallen and helpless nation which God's Providence has committed to the care and training of his own happier country. But it is often alleged as a great discouragement to exertion in this matter, that while so much is attempted so little is accomplished, that we see such trifling results from our labours, that conversions are rare, and the general improvement of the masses almost imperceptible. Yet surely, brethren, this excuse for inactivity is only a proof how prone we are to reverse the Apostle's precept, and to walk by sight, not by faith. We cannot doubt that God will bring about the accomplishment of His promise to *pour out His spirit upon all flesh*. Unless we are really, in our hearts, indifferent to Christ's Redemption, we believe in its universal efficacy, and in its power to triumph over every form of evil. We know, for so the example of every truly holy man in the Bible teaches us, of Abraham, Moses, Joshua, and the prophets, Paul, Peter, John and the Apostles, and above all, of Him who is the Lord and King both of prophets and apostles, that we must work for others and not for ourselves, for days to come as well as for the time in which we live. It may be that the conversion of this land may still be long delayed. Time must be required to overthrow an ancient civilisation and a religion deeply impressed upon the whole inner and outer lives of their votaries. Many years will hardly suffice to quicken apathetic indifference into a desire for spiritual life, to overcome inveterate prejudices, to uproot ignorance

and avarice, and selfishness and pride, to accomplish the preliminary mission of John the Baptist, and bring home to the hearts of the people the message of repentance, the preparation for the coming Kingdom of Heaven. But if we are idle and uninterested about the work, if we fail to support those who are labouring in God's vineyard, if we permit missionary work to be checked by refusing our money, our encouragement, our prayers, then doubtless the great consummation will be yet longer retarded; neither our children nor our children's children will see Ceylon rescued from wickedness and irreligion, and changed into the land flowing with milk and honey, the happy home and heritage of God's people, redeemed, forgiven, and accepted, through our Lord Jesus Christ. And surely, if there be a spiritual captivity worse than Egyptian bondage, if there be a desert more stern and barren than the great Arabian wilderness, it is the slavery of ignorance and sin, the desolation of those who are living without God in the world, with no faith in a Father who loves them, a Saviour who has redeemed them, a Spirit sent to make them holy, with no strength and support for the present life, no sure hope for the eternal world. From this prison-house, brethren, and this howling wilderness, we are called, like Moses, to rescue a nation, in the midst of whom our lot is cast, and who are called to be God's children no less than ourselves. Do not let us say that little is done—perhaps this is to a great degree our own fault—but let us bear our part according to our means and opportunities in this mighty work, believing that the issue is in God's hands, and that we are His agents, bound faithfully and patiently to carry it on in our own

time, and to deliver it over for other generations to complete. And let us not doubt that, by helping the work in such a spirit, we really shall by His grace and blessing benefit ourselves also, and further our own spiritual good. First and most obviously, I am sure that our care for others reacts upon our own souls; that the more anxious we are for the spread of the Gospel, the more sure and practical is our own faith in Jesus Christ; and, on the other hand, that the more our own personal faith is strengthened, the more interest do we feel in the great missionary cause. Again, it is a most precious lesson to work in simple obedience to God, and with faith in His promises. It teaches us to rise above all petty jealousy of others whom we think more honoured and yet less deserving than ourselves, it enlarges and strengthens our views of duty, it makes us unselfish, large minded, and large hearted, like Moses, at once meek in spirit and energetic in action. It helps us to appreciate the glory of Christ's character, the sacrifice of self by which He wrought our redemption, and therefore to understand how His redeemed must walk after His pattern. For your own sakes, brethren, no less than for the sake of the heathen, I urge you to take a living interest in this great cause, even though to us is granted no more than to see from a distant Pisgah the glorious vision of a Christianised Asia. Labour on in the sure belief that the vision will be accomplished in God's good time, certain that meanwhile they who water others are watered also themselves, and that through an unselfish zeal in building up Christ's Kingdom we shall receive most abundantly and lastingly His blessing upon our own souls.

SERMON VII.

FORT CHURCH, MADRAS, 1864.

GOSPEL FRUITS.

Godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.—1 Tim. iv. 8.

ONE of the most unreasonable objections to Christianity which unbelievers have urged in these modern days is this: that a religion which teaches us to set our hopes and affections on things above must necessarily make us indifferent to things around us. The future, it is argued, must obscure the present, and while Christians are striving after the imaginary glories of the next world, they become indifferent to the joys and sorrows, the advantages and evils, the material happiness, the physical suffering, the gradual enlightenment and improvement of this world. One of these reasoners has thanked God that by renouncing Christianity he has learned to love this world with all his heart, and therefore to devote himself zealously to the service of his fellow-creatures. A new sect, happily at present small and weak, but perhaps more influential among the manufacturing population of England and Scotland than

we should be willing to acknowledge, avowedly rejects all belief in a future state, worships Humanity as its god, and openly maintains that, by devoting our whole energies to this world, we shall effect real, tangible benefits; whereas by introducing the distracting and unproved doctrine of another world, we only turn men's efforts in a fantastic direction, send them in a vain quest after an *ignis fatuus*, and so hinder them their true progress towards perfection. Now, it is not too much to say that the whole history of God's Revelation to man is a perpetual protest against such a delusion as this. The very first chapter of Genesis contradicts it, for it tells us that the world was created by a personal Deity, who therefore cares for it and loves it, and desires the happiness of His children whom He has placed in it. Whereas those who reject this idea of a personal God and Creator, which lies at the foundation of the Gospel, such as the Buddhists whom the traveller still finds dominant in Burmah and Ceylon, are really liable to this censure which has been unjustly cast on Christians, for they undoubtedly do maintain that man's highest wisdom and goodness consists in entire abstraction from the interests and occupations of this life. The whole history of the Old Testament refutes the same delusion, for there we see the same great Creator of the world ruling it by His gracious Providence, guiding his chosen nation to a land flowing with milk and honey, gradually civilising, enlightening, and purifying them, and so ordering events that their temporal condition was made dependent on obedience to His commandments. The Lord's Prayer is another refutation of it, for we are there taught to pray that God's will may be done upon earth,

and in the very form of our supplications we acknowledge the tie which unites us as brethren to all men. The moral teaching of the New Testament supplies abundant contradictions of it, for St. Paul has laid down as an essential principle that if any man will not work neither shall he eat, and Christ has promised that the meek shall inherit the earth, and that if we will first seek the kingdom of God and His righteousness, all things needful for the body shall be added unto us. The results of Christianity have also refuted it, and have furnished a perpetual illustration of these words of our Lord. For wherever the Gospel has come, it has necessarily brought with it industry, energy, compassion for sorrow, unselfishness, brotherly love, which are among its most indispensable virtues; and thus it has shown itself everywhere as the light of the world, diffusing far and wide the bright beams of civilisation, refinement, and progress. The conduct of the best Christians has uniformly contradicted it likewise, for they have always borne the foremost part in relieving the ills which flesh is heir to, in diminishing pain and sorrow, in tempering cruelty, in rectifying inequality, in discountenancing all that tends to the misery and degradation of men. In the old Roman times gladiator shows and similar brutalising sports were put down by Christian influence. Hospitals and other charitable institutions were first known when the world became Christian. In the middle ages, education and mental enlightenment were almost exclusively the work of the Church. The purification of Christianity by the Reformers brought with it intellectual growth and a general development of civilisation. In our fathers' time the curse of the slave trade

was abolished by the efforts of earnest Christians, consciously and avowedly fighting the battle of the Lord. In our own days, when disputes have arisen between powerful colonists and the ignorant and helpless natives of an uncivilised country, missionaries have always taken the oppressed, the unpopular, the more generous and compassionate side. In a word, to sum up all our arguments in one, the present aspect of Christendom, in spite of all its faults and weaknesses, and shortcomings, and positive sins, when compared with the condition of every other class or body of nations upon earth, is a visible and standing proof of the falsehood of the assertion that the belief in heaven is any hindrance to the welfare of earth, and of the truth of our text, that *godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*

I have been led into these thoughts in connection with the cause which I have undertaken to plead before you, because I am more and more convinced that these words are now receiving a new historical fulfilment in India, and that the highest aspirations of philanthropists and statesmen, for the intellectual and material welfare of this vast empire, can only be fulfilled by the gradual working of that leaven of Christian truth, by which the whole condition of native society will at last be pervaded by refining and purifying influences. You will bear with me, brethren, if I refer for a few minutes, in illustration of my argument, to sights which I myself have seen. In the south portion of this great peninsula, the experiment has been fairly tried, the leaven of Christianity has not only been infused, but has actually

begun to work, so that we are enabled by this time to judge of its results, and I do not hesitate to say that through the unpretending evangelistic labours of the missionaries in Tinnevelly and Travancore, those social evils which the English government most desires to uproot are gradually giving way, and the temporal, intellectual, and moral improvement which it laudably and earnestly seeks to promote is silently and surely advancing. Take, for instance, the great duty of educating the youth of India, on which so much has been written, so much enthusiasm professed, so many efforts made by government. In the great province of Tinnevelly the Gospel has brought with it a complete system of vernacular instruction, which is extended to the very humblest of the Christian peasantry, to the Shanars and Pariahs, from whom the proud Brahmin shrinks as the impure and degraded offspring of a race wholly different from his own. This wide network of schools is supported by two admirable training colleges for masters, in one of which information is given through the medium of the English, in the other of the Tamil language, while connected with these are means of educating catechists for the pastoral care of the Christian population. And if it is inferred from this that churchmen now confine themselves to the comparatively humble task of training the lower classes in their own vernacular, and forget that their predecessors in earlier times claimed to themselves, and purified by Christian influences, that higher education and noble western literature which India rightly expects to receive from Europe; I may point to a central English school in the capital

of the province where not Christians only, but a large number of heathen also, may share the intellectual improvement which is derived from English learning, sanctified and elevated by that moral and spiritual element which Christianity alone, of all religions, has infused into mental culture. And, by God's blessing, this school has been the means of bringing to the knowledge of Christ some of the higher castes, who are now adorning their profession by a consistent life. Again, we all feel shame and sorrow for the degraded condition of women in India, for the prejudices which hamper any attempt to instruct them, and for the precepts of Hindu lawgivers and holy men, which enjoin that they should be kept in a position of servile ignorance, and taught to regard their husbands as greater than Sharkara or Vishnu. We have heard of the darker policy, scarcely yet wholly eradicated, which prevents any troublesome increase of the female population by the terrible expedient of infanticide. With what joy, then, should any philanthropist who desires the advancement of his species contemplate the numerous female schools which the Church of Christ has set up in this same province of Tinnevelly; the provision afforded for the permanence of these schools by a training institution for schoolmistresses at Palamcottah; the large and eagerly attended Bible classes of women who throng the floors of the village churches, and answer with intelligence, reverence, and ready quickness, questions on the history, the doctrines, and moral precepts of Holy Scripture. So, too, it is impossible to overlook the material and temporal benefits which the Gospel has brought with

it into Tinnevelly. We cannot gainsay the evidence of neat and orderly villages, habits of regularity, industry, and energy, introduced among the peasantry who climb the tall palmyras, or cultivate the patches of fertile soil reclaimed from the red sand of the desert. We cannot deny that hence have resulted in some cases worldly circumstances so flourishing that the missionaries have rather to guard their converts against improvidence and indolence; so that, as one of them said, the state of society is undergoing a complete change; and, whereas the Shanars used to be in hopeless debt to the Brahmins, the Brahims are now borrowing money from the Shanars. With one more illustration of these incidental benefits, by which we see the force and meaning of the text, I will pass from this part of my subject. It is well known that in Travancore there exists a slave caste, far lower than even the Pariahs in the social scale, who were beyond all others despised and neglected, and not unfrequently cruelly oppressed by harsh and exacting masters. One beneficial effect of the English supremacy in India is that the Travancore government has greatly mitigated these evils, has refused to recognise slavery in legal proceedings and courts of justice, and has elevated the condition of this humble caste from that of actual bondsmen, to that of hired labourers partially attached to a particular master and a particular place. All honour to the secular power for this benevolent alteration (effected, be it observed, entirely under Christian influence); but it is the Church which has actively sought out these outcasts, and dissipated the darkness and ignorance which hindered them from comprehending or using their new social advantages. Many are now taught

in mission schools, some are our baptised brethren in Christ Jesus: they take pleasure in Christian worship, listen with interest to Christian exhortation, and have become so much more useful from their new habits of intelligence and conscientious diligence, that heathen masters urge the unbaptised among them to seek instruction from the missionaries, that so they may reap to themselves the benefit of employing honest and sensible labourers, instead of mere living machines inaccessible to any argument but blows. So faithfully do our missionaries copy their Master's example of seeking out and saving those who are lost, and obey His command to preach the Gospel to the poor. So surely does the Gospel, when it is so preached, fulfil the Divine promise of deliverance to the captive, renewing of sight to the blind, and liberty to them that are bruised: so mighty is its efficacy to make the crooked straight, and the rough places plain.

We see, then, brethren, that so far from considering the Gospel careless of the temporal good of India, our best and purest wishes for the prosperity of this nation, in the life that now is, will be most surely fulfilled by missionary work, and that all who desire to promote that end are bound by their sympathies, their contributions, and their prayers, to support that work. We do not undervalue—on the contrary, we applaud and encourage—the efforts which the State is making to further the welfare of the people by material improvements, education, and above all by good laws, good government, the example of purity, justice, and benevolence in all its dealings with the various races which are subject to its authority. We hail all these as powerful auxiliaries in

the great work which is before us, but at the same time we see in them also a testimony to the divinity and power of the Gospel. For we cannot overlook the fact that the first government of India which has tried to do its duty to the people is a Christian government; containing men who have themselves experienced the power of Christ's Spirit, none who are not influenced, consciously or unconsciously, by the recollection of Christ's example and the Christian associations in which they have grown up. The power of the Gospel and of the Christian Church makes itself felt indirectly in the work of English statesmen, no less than directly in the work of English missionaries. Our Mahometan predecessors did not set before their Hindu subjects a pattern of integrity, self-restraint, and impartiality. And thus nearly all the good which is now working in India is really a support to the argument which I am trying to press upon you—an illustration of the assurance that *godliness hath promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.*

Still, I am sure that the state cannot raise India from degradation without the help of Christ's Church, nay, without conceding to the Church in many things, such as education, the most prominent position. For in the first place the Gospel alone can supply that moral and spiritual element, in mental culture and material improvement, which can remedy those grave faults that are often justly censured in the younger generation of educated Hindus, such as self-indulgence, worldliness, and a frothy and pretentious love of words without any corresponding energy in deeds. The Gospel alone can restore, by the bonds of love, that restraint to the pas-

sions which was before imperfectly furnished through idolatry and superstition, but which mere intellectual knowledge, if left unaided by a higher power, can never replace. And, again, those who preach the Gospel—the missionaries who have sacrificed their homes, their country, their worldly prospects, perhaps their health and strength, often their tenderest affections, for the sake of Christ—may naturally be expected to bring to the work those blessed weapons of zeal and love and self-denial, which can alone be mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. I myself lately heard a heathen prince entreat the pupils of a school, in which he took a warm and intelligent interest, to listen carefully to the instructions of missionaries, as the friends and benefactors of India. By none, except by ministers of the Gospel, can the Hindu be gradually trained, through the hallowing influence of pastoral care and fatherly watchfulness, to those habits of order, truthfulness, energy, and self-reliance, without which India cannot assume her proper place among the nations, and which we, to whom God's Providence has committed the destinies of India, are bound to further and encourage.

But perhaps some of you may complain that I am urging you to support the great missionary cause from unspiritual and inferior motives. I readily plead guilty to the accusation. The intellectual, temporal, and material welfare of this country, the progress of industry, order, and outward prosperity are not the highest grounds on which you, my brethren, should strive and pray for the success of missions. But they are very real and definite grounds, they are reasons for exertion

upon which God in Christ has set the seal of his approbation. And they are reasons which ought, I think, to have special weight at this time and in this place. Personally, they have great weight with me, who have lately been privileged to see with my own eyes how real, how manifest, how plainly ordered by God are the efforts of Christianity, in producing those happy results which we all desire for India. Secondly, in a congregation assembled in one of our presidency cities there must always be present many who are directly bound, either by official position, or by enlightened philanthropy, or by the wealth which they derive from the commerce of this great country, to exert themselves heartily in the work of elevating its people in the scale of nations, and who therefore should be reminded of the only sure means by which that elevation can be effected. And in times when it is too common to speak in slighting terms of the Divine power of Christianity, when men deny its influence to regenerate a nation, to give life to all institutions, to establish upon earth the reign of peace and good will, it is most necessary to maintain that, as the miseries which afflict mankind are the consequences and penalties of sin, so they cannot be permanently eradicated except by the Divine power of Him who conquered sin. Therefore, brethren, I do again urge upon you to support missionary work, because God sent Jesus Christ to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness from the prison-house, and has promised that when the day of His glory is fully come, the *wolf shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with*

the kid, and they shall not hurt nor destroy in all His holy mountain: for the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

But while I advocate the cause of missions as the cause of education, enlightenment, civilisation, and prosperity in the best and truest sense, God forbid that I should forget those far higher motives for bringing the Hindus to Christ, which follow from the great truth that only through the knowledge of Him can they be reconciled to God. Not that they may snatch the corruptible crown of earthly knowledge and national greatness, but that they may receive from God an incorruptible crown of righteousness and life eternal, does the Church send forth its prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers to save them from an untoward generation, and to baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. If their temporal welfare is an object at which all Christians ought to aim, much more should we seek to further their eternal salvation. If we desire to enrich them with the treasures of earthly knowledge, much more should we seek to fill them with the knowledge of God in Jesus Christ. Think of them, then, brethren, not only as degraded in their social and national life, but as perishing sinners. Think of the greatness of the blessings and privileges which we enjoy, and of which they are ignorant. If the lower motive ought to have great weight with you, this higher and holier motive should indeed be all powerful. Help, then, those, I entreat you, brethren, who are teaching the natives of this country that Christ died for them, and that, in spite of all their sins and weaknesses and

miserable idolatries, He will give to them His Holy Spirit if only they will humbly and diligently seek Him. Let England bestow upon India this priceless gift of the Gospel, and then we shall indeed have done the work to which God has called us, we shall have found the lost sheep, we shall have brought back to his father's home the fallen and prodigal son.

SERMON VIII.

BARRACKPORE, 1864.

PSALM XC.

Establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it.—Psalm xc. 17.

COMMENTATORS are scarcely agreed as to the origin of the titles prefixed to the different psalms, nor as to the amount of authority which they can fairly claim. This is not the time or place to discuss a critical question, but thus much may be said as bearing on the subject which I desire to bring before you, that these titles at least embody the general opinion and tradition of an early age, and are the result of the best enquiries which the framers of the Old Testament canon were enabled to make, into the authorship of the different hymns and poems which they collected together and delivered over to the Christian Church as an inspired manual of prophecy, thanksgiving, private devotion, and public worship. When, therefore, we open our Bibles at this 90th psalm and perceive that its title is 'a prayer of Moses the man of God,' we are at least bound to begin our study of it with the presumption that this title is correct, and that the psalm is a relic of the great prophet who was com-

missioned by God to lead His people from the bondage of Egypt. And when we read the psalm we shall find a considerable amount of internal evidence favourable to this supposition, and only one difficulty which seems opposed to it. That difficulty arises from the well-known verse: *The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labour and sorrow; for it is soon cut off and we fly away.* Such a view of human life, it is argued, could hardly have been taken by Moses, of whom we are told that, though *he was an hundred and twenty years old when he died,* yet *his eye was not dim, nor his natural force abated.* But surely it is a fair answer to this to say that the case of Moses was altogether peculiar; the long term of life allotted to the patriarchs had ceased before his time, his strength and clearness of vision were providentially prolonged that he might accomplish the great work which God had given him to do; but as to his contemporaries the Divine decree had been announced—that though their wandering in the wilderness lasted only for forty years, yet because *they had tempted the Lord and not hearkened unto His voice, they should not see the land which He sware unto their fathers, neither should any of them which provoked Him see it.* Moses, therefore, speaking as it were in the name of the people, whose term of life did not exceed that to which we are now accustomed, gives expression to a feeling with which they would all deeply sympathise, since it described exactly their own experience. And his words go yet more keenly home to the heart of all subsequent generations—we feel that they are essentially human, for we are undisturbed by any near recollections of a time when

a longer span of life was allotted to mankind, and therefore we are not surprised at their occurrence in a psalm intended by God to remain for the permanent edification of His church. And if we turn to the rest of this inspired poem we find many traces of the hand of Moses the man of God. Its general tone harmonises with the belief that it is his composition. It seems to have been written in sadness after years of apparently fruitless wandering. Its imagery is borrowed from the events of an eastern journey; having allusions to the sudden descent of the mountain torrent—*thou carriest them away as with a flood*; and to the night watches and broken slumbers of an army on the march—*they are as a sleep, as a watch in the night.* Human life is compared to the grass rapidly growing in the desert after rain and as rapidly scorched by the mid-day sun—*in the morning it flourisheth and groweth up; in the evening it is cut down and withereth.* The resemblance of the psalm to the book of Deuteronomy is unmistakable. Take the very first verse, *Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations*—or, as it stands in our Prayer Book version, *Thou hast been our refuge from one generation to another*—and compare it with *the blessing wherewith Moses the man of God blest the children of Israel before his death. The eternal God is thy refuge,* he said, *and underneath are the everlasting arms.* Or take another verse, *Return, O Lord, how long? and let it repent Thee concerning Thy servants.* Here we have a prayer uttered apparently in a time of disappointment and despondency. We again open the book of Deuteronomy and we find, in the words which Moses spoke (as we believe) some time after this psalm, the confident assurance that this prayer will be

fulfilled. *The Lord shall judge His people and repent Himself for His servants when He seeth that their power is gone.* It is needless to pursue this comparison further; it is sufficient to say that the contents of the psalm support its superscription, and that we may regard it not only with the reverence due to Scripture, but with the hearty human interest which attaches to a composition of Moses the man of God, recording his feelings in looking back over the chequered experience of such a life as no man before him and very few after him have ever lived.

If now we turn to the retrospect of the past which he has here given, our first remark must be that it is sorrowful. The thought which pervades the greater part of the psalm is that life is transitory and monotonous, that human effort is weak and aimless. He speaks as one who felt that the people for whom he had worked were still not much better than when he first brought them out of Egypt, still unworthy to enter the Promised Land. *Thou turnest man to destruction*—such is his melancholy reflection on God's omnipotence—*and sayest, Return,* to the earth from which ye came, *ye children of men.* When even a thousand years are gone they have left but little that is permanent behind them; generation after generation has passed away in an ever-recurring cycle; much has been lost, little gained, all is over like a watch in the night, like a broken sleep, like the fading grass, all vanishing under God's indignation, coming to an end like a tale that is told—which interested us perhaps during its progress, but has left nothing but a vague and unsatisfactory recollection behind it. But this view of human life—natural more or less to us all, especially in times of despondency or disappointment, and certainly

not devoid of important practical lessons—is one which must be carefully watched and balanced by other considerations, or it will lead us into serious error. We shall remember at once two unchristian inferences which have been made from it. One is that of the Epicurean, *let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we die.* There are some who view the transitory character of life in a reckless, unscrupulous spirit, who think that as it is so uncertain the best use to make of it is to enjoy it. So they give themselves up either to actual pleasure and luxurious living, seizing to-day the gratifications which may be snatched from them to-morrow, or else to the selfish struggles of ambition, to the desire of securing worldly dignities and advantages, to the work of heaping up riches for children who perhaps may not live to gather them. The mere thought that the time is short, if it is not associated with the opposite reflection that eternity is long, is not calculated to make men better but worse. We have read of the headstrong desire for an hour's passing enjoyment which has often appeared in hideous contrast with the horrors of a time of pestilence; of the banquetings and revelries in which men indulged when the plague was near them at Athens and at Florence; of the dances and lighthearted merriment which resounded through the prisons of Paris at the time of the great Revolution. So, too, it is often observed that commercial speculation is never more reckless, and the desire of acquiring wealth more intense, than when a country is involved in some terrible war which almost endangers its existence, or at least is daily sweeping away the younger generation for whom this wealth is stored. These are the most hateful conse-

quences of a mere naked belief that the life of man is passing away as a watch in the night. There is another which is less immoral but hardly less alien to the lessons which God desires us to learn from this uncertainty. Sometimes people take refuge not in recklessness but in weariness and satiety. Perhaps they fall into a morose frame of mind which renounces society altogether, and think that they will avoid contact with a miserable world by taking no part in its interests or pursuits. They may shut themselves up in religious or literary seclusion, or intellectual indifference, or they may in some other way practically declare themselves regardless of the things around them, urging that nothing is stable but that all is vanity and vexation of spirit. Yet even if this separation from life takes the best form, that of religious retirement, it is not the path in which God designed that His children should walk. True, He meant them not to be of this world, but He has placed them in the world with the intention that they should work for it. Christ's prayer for His disciples was *not that they should be taken out of the world, but that they should be kept from the evil.* Those who draw such inferences as these from the psalm before us have only read half of it. Doubtless it contains much melancholy meaning, but it is also full of abundant consolation. Let us now see in what that consolation consists.

First, it consists in the revelation of God as our refuge, *Lord, Thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations.* Earthly things may change, but He abideth faithful. *Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to*

everlasting, Thou art God. And then having His Name for our trust, His law for our guide, His promises for our security, we are taught to approach Him and ask Him to unravel our perplexity, to free us from the difficulties which surround our short and fleeting existence, so that we may use the thought not as an excuse for indolence, or recklessness, or for sentimentalism, but as an incentive to diligence. *So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.* A more literal version makes the prayer yet more striking. The word here rendered *apply* is used elsewhere of gathering in the harvest. *Ye have sown much,* says the prophet Haggai, *but bring in,* or apply to your own use, *little.* The same word is used here. *O teach us to number our days, that we may bring home as the fruits of Thy teaching a heart of wisdom.* This, then, suggests to us that the same God, who is our refuge and dwelling-place, is not unmindful of any efforts which we may make in His service. He who by His Spirit alone can give us a heart of wisdom, will also enable us to bring forth fruit worthy of His own gift. We are assured that if God is with us our toil is not aimless: the results may be slowly developed, and often interrupted by human perversity and our own weakness and ignorance, but still if we work faithfully and unselfishly, we shall by His help contribute something to the great task which He has assigned to all His children. He teaches us this in the text. *The work of our hands, O establish upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it.* What God establishes cannot be without result. And therefore we come to this practical lesson. Whether life smiles upon us or not, whether we are in trouble or in prosperity, whether we are permitted or

not to see any fruit of our labour, still we can only fulfil our duty and find our happiness by carrying on, in humble dependence on God's grace and blessing, wise vigorous and conscientious work. When we look back upon the years which are gone, and forward to the few which yet remain for us, and think how transitory and unsatisfying is our life, our truest wisdom is to seek consolation in the belief that God is the ruler both of the world and of our own hearts and lives, that He has placed each of us here for some definite purpose, and that we are endeavouring to accomplish that purpose. The question for each is not whether he has had his share of the enjoyments and advantages of life, but whether he has taken his part, bravely and faithfully, in the work of life. As life draws to its close, a man feels little satisfaction in looking back on his pleasures and his honours; on the contrary, he wonders that things which seemed so great in the prospect are so trifling in the retrospect, that objects at which he once grasped so eagerly have now sunk into such utter insignificance. This very indifference with which we now regard them is a fresh proof that life is indeed like a tale that is told, and that our days have vanished under God's indignation. But if we have learned *so to number them as to apply our hearts unto wisdom*, that wisdom which consists not in laying up treasure for ourselves but in becoming rich towards God; if we are trying to serve not ourselves but our brethren; if amidst all our weaknesses and secret sins, we can bring home to our memory some real work, however humble its aim and extent, diligently and thoughtfully performed, then we may *be satisfied with the mercy of God* and feel gladness in pro-

portion to the days of our affliction. Thus it has been said by a great writer, a mind fixed and bent upon somewhat that is good doth avert the dolors of death; but above all, believe it, the sweetest canticle is, *Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant depart in peace,* when a man hath obtained worthy ends and expectations. And a Christian poet of our own day, in something of the spirit of this psalm, contemplating human life gliding away like a stream, takes comfort from the thought of work thus brought to a happy completion:

> Enough, if something from our hands have power
> To live and act and serve the future hour;
> And if as towards the silent tomb we go,
> Through love, through hope, and faith's transcendant dower,
> We feel that we are greater than we know.

We in India should speak less and hear less of disgust at the country, and weariness of our occupation in it, if we would honestly try to interest ourselves in the men and things around us, and work while it is day, before the night is come. We may all find encouragement and help under many trials, first by taking an active living interest in the duties allotted to us in our various professions, and performing our ordinary work with energy and conscientious diligence; and, secondly, by endeavouring to help forward some of the many schemes of Christian benevolence and usefulness in which the co-operation of laymen is of such especial value.

But some may think that I am assigning to work a place which it does not occupy in the Christian scheme; that I am speaking as if our happiness and salvation depended upon our own efforts; nay, that I am encouraging an arrogant self-righteousness or at least an

unblest self-reliance. Brethren, it is not so. When I speak of work in the house of God, I mean of course Christian work. And Christian work is necessarily humble work, prompted and fostered by the Spirit of Christ, work done from love and gratitude to Him *who laid down His life for His friends.* Doubtless, when we look back on the past in the light of Christian experience, and with the eyes of our understanding purged by the knowledge of God, our best deeds will appear the merest trifles when compared with our obligations to our Redeemer. We shall feel that we are unprofitable servants, and have fallen far short of our bounden duty. We shall feel, too, that our works have been polluted by sin, prompted too much by vanity, or ambition, or the desire of applause, or a natural turn for active business, too little by the simple wish to offer and present to God, in return for His mercies, the reasonable service of our souls and bodies. Still, it is by these works, miserably imperfect as they are, that God will judge us at the last; these are the works which He desires and commands us to perform. His blessed Son gave Himself for us to redeem us from all iniquity, and to purify unto Himself a peculiar people zealous of good works. By this zeal in good works He bids us persevere in the battle of life, and though it is true that this world is vain and transitory, yet it is through such work that Christians are to complete the task of its redemption which Christ began. Moreover, if we thus regard our work only as a hearty thankoffering to Christ who died for us, we shall not feel mortified or disappointed if some of our undertakings have not been perfectly successful; we know that efforts are ours, results are His, and that He will accept

every wise and earnest attempt to do good, even if He has not thought fit to guide it to a prosperous end. Therefore let us carry away with us from our public worship to-day this lesson, to work heartily and conscientiously, but yet not to carry on our work in our own strength, but in that which comes from above, not vainly or proudly or for our own advantage, but humbly, faithfully, unselfishly, that so it may be sprinkled with the blood of Christ, offered up to the Father through His merits, and thus consecrated altogether to His glory.

You are called upon to-day, my brethren, to help in one particular good work which has a special claim upon Europeans in India. You are asked to assist in promoting the Christian education of the young. That the number of those who cannot afford to send their children home for education is annually increasing, must be acknowledged by all. That in our large cities—such as Calcutta, Allahabad, Lahore, Nagpore, Rangoon, and many others—there is a large number of Christians of mixed blood, clerks and others on small salaries; that, again, our railways and other engineering works, and our various plantations, are bringing into the country a number of Englishmen of the middle and lower classes, whose children must be educated in India or utterly neglected, is equally manifest. The Board of Education, which I am asking you to support, seeks especially to help in the foundation of schools for these classes, and has already done so to a considerable extent. I ask you, then, by your liberal contributions to help to establish this work of our hands upon us; I ask you to pray for God's blessing upon it, for He alone can truly establish it. Remember the many blessings which have

been brought unasked and unhoped-for to your doors, the tender care and thoughtful instruction which surrounded the early years of your own children; and help us to bring up the children of our fellow-countrymen and fellow-Christians in such knowledge as may make them useful and happy in this life, and inheritors of Christ's eternal promises in the life which is to come.

SERMON IX.

ST. JAMES'S, CALCUTTA, 1864.

CONSECRATION OF A CHURCH.

The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.—Haggai, ii. 9.

WHATEVER doubts may gather round the interpretation of particular parts of the famous prophecy from which this verse is quoted, its general drift is clear. The Jews who had returned from the captivity were assembled with feelings of mingled hope and anxiety round the foundations of the second temple. The older among them, ancient men who had seen the first house, felt bitterly the contrast between its stately magnificence and the humble structure which was rising slowly and doubtfully from the midst of desolation and ruin. They wept with a loud voice when they thought of the cedar, and the gold, and the olive wood, and the cunning work in brass of Hiram the Tyrian, and the two pillars Jachin and Boaz which adorned the porch of the temple, and all the art and wealth which Solomon had lavished on his *holy and beautiful house*. Still more bitter were their memories of the ark of the covenant, and the visible

glory of the Divine Presence, by which the former temple had been known to all men as the habitation of the living God. The prophet Haggai was commissioned to console them for the loss of the irrevocable past by the promise of a more glorious future. *For thus saith the Lord of hosts* (such was the authority of the message); *Yet once, it is a little while, and I will shake the heavens, and the earth, and the sea, and the dry land; And I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come: and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts. The silver is mine, and the gold is mine, saith the Lord of hosts. The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former, saith the Lord of hosts: and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts.* Now, it may be true, it probably is true, that the phrase *the Desire of all nations* cannot bear that striking and well-known interpretation which we generally find in ordinary commentaries on the passage. It is probable that the reference is not to a Redeemer, for whom all nations were longing, but to the desirable things or treasures of all nations, so that the prediction corresponds to that of the sixtieth chapter of Isaiah, where the sons of the strangers are represented as hastening in the latter day to bring their offerings to God. This meaning seems to follow from applying to the passage the ordinary rules of interpretation, and I need hardly say that if through them we arrive at such a result, no natural regret for the loss of an edifying and familiar text must prevent us from accepting and proclaiming it. But passing over that point of detail as comparatively unimportant, I cannot doubt that the whole prophecy is strictly Messianic; that it was fulfilled in Christian times; that the glory of the latter house

excelled the glory of the former, because the Lord Jesus Christ appeared in its aisles and cloisters, not as a transitory Shechinah, or mere ray of the Divine glory, but as the Son of God and Son of Man, *the mystery of godliness manifest in the flesh*, and there proclaimed the eternal laws of the kingdom of Heaven. It is not possible to conceive that Haggai merely meant that in outward and material splendour the second temple should surpass the first, for even the prodigal munificence of Herod can never have exceeded the antique splendour of Solomon. Besides, it is wholly alien to the spirit of the Hebrew prophets to dwell literally on outward magnificence; their sketches of material beauty and grandeur are but metaphors to represent to us some spiritual truth; nor, again, could any amount of gold and silver and precious things make up for the absence of that mysterious cloud which filled the former house, and brought home to the very senses of the people the protection of the Most High God. And, finally, the spiritual sense of the passage is secured by the last clause of the text, *in this place I will give peace*, and by the opening of the whole passage, *I will shake the heaven, and the earth, and the sea, and I will shake all nations*. The prophet foresees a mighty religious and social change, a convulsion which should agitate the world, and penetrate all nations. That change should be essentially connected with the second temple, in it should be spoken words, and from it should go forth a new law which should far surpass in glory the sanctity which had gathered round the first temple and the old law of which it was the centre: there the Son of God should preach *peace to them that were afar off and to them that are nigh*, and seal by His death that covenant of peace in which

God and man were henceforth to be united through the one Mediator, and all mankind, Jew and Greek, male and female, bond and free, to be joined together in a holy and spiritual brotherhood. The prophet seems almost to lose sight of the material fabric, while gazing on the vision of that spiritual fabric which was to arise from it and supersede it. The gold, the silver, the desirable things of all nations, though doubtless literally used for the outward decoration of the second temple, are but figures representing the spiritual offerings and graces which should adorn the Church of Christ.

We see, then, that the only sense in which the glory of the second temple was greater than that of the former temple was a Christian sense. Christ was to be there, God's peace was to be there proclaimed and the covenant ratified, mankind were to be invited to serve God in the house of prayer which was to be built for all nations. And now, my brethren, inhabitants of St. James's district, and you who are to form the future congregation of this new church, what are your predominant thoughts on this occasion of its consecration? Many of you can remember—though I cannot—the former house, which fell in ruins six years ago. Have you been chiefly occupied during the evening's service in contrasting the architecture of this building with that of its predecessor—in rejoicing (as no doubt you may) on its loftier aisles, its richer decorations, its statelier and more church-like appearance? I do not in the least undervalue these advantages; on the contrary, I earnestly desire that every church in India should be such that its outward form and aspect may suggest to the worshipper solemn thoughts and associations, and

harmonise, as far as outward things can harmonise, with the holy purpose to which it is dedicated, and the Divine Presence which is invoked by those who minister within its walls. But I must remind you, or rather the prophet whose words we are considering reminds you, that these are matters of secondary importance only, that the true temple of God in this district is not this *material* fabric, but you, the living souls for whom Christ died, you who have been baptised into His name, and whom He desires to *purify unto Himself as a peculiar people, zealous of good works. For ye, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.* Remember, then, that the dedication of this church to God will be a reality in His eyes only if the worship here offered, the sermon here preached, the resolutions here made, the penitence here felt, the alms and offerings here presented, the praises and thanksgivings here poured forth, are the genuine fruit of hearts truly touched by the mercy of God in Christ Jesus. I have often heard that among those who ministered in the former church of this district the name of Robert Bruce Boswell is worthy of peculiar honour, that he is still affectionately remembered among you as a faithful pastor of Christ's people, that in his time many careless hearts were roused to thoughtfulness, many sinners won to Christ. If, then, the glory of this latter house is to be in any true sense greater than the glory of the former house, it is plain that he who is to minister and you who are to worship in it must aim at a really high standard; that the prayers here offered must be yet more contrite, the preaching yet more earnest, the good

works of the congregation yet more abundant, the homes of the district yet more Christian, the lives of individuals among you yet more advanced in holiness than under his ministry. Remember, then, that we must never stand still, that the Church of Christ must be ever aggressive, the number of its true members ever increasing, their faith and hope and love always intensifying. Let this, then, be the first and principal thought resulting from this day's ceremony, and let this be the true purpose and end of our consecration of this building, that we dedicate it to constant growth in godliness. It has been erected among our private dwellings to remind us of the only living and true God. It is reared in a city busily devoted to commerce and industry and this world's gain, to be a retreat for self-scrutiny and for communion with the King of kings and Lord of lords. It is reared in a heathen city, testifying that there is One who cares for the souls of all men, and inviting those who are without His fold to seek the sheltering care of the Good Shepherd. We consecrate it to His power, His wisdom, His holiness, His free unmerited grace. We consecrate it to Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord, to the preaching of that truth which He sealed with His blood, to the administration of those sacraments which He instituted, and of those other ordinances which are to hallow our daily life by the remembrance of Him. We consecrate it to the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, and converts and sanctifies men's hearts. We consecrate it to prayers and praises here to be heartily offered, and, as we trust, be continued and perfected in heaven. We consecrate it to social worship, to the communion

of saints, to the fellowship of the Church on earth. We consecrate it to the cause of holiness, to the fruit of the Spirit, to love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance. We consecrate it to Christian preaching, to those warnings and remonstrances by which the sinner is arrested in his downward course, to those consolations which assuage sorrow and lighten the load of human anxiety, to those encouragements which strengthen the Christian in his efforts to serve God. We consecrate it to the glorious hope and promise that those who have loved Christ here shall see Him face to face hereafter. We name it after one of His Apostles, the son of Zebedee, who was early called upon to drink of the cup which his Master had drained, and we would remember that we also may be required *in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer for His sake.* This, then, brethren, is the true lesson to be learned from this day's ceremony; this is the object and purpose of this church: in your edification only can its true glory consist. Christian virtues and earnest prayers, and devout hearts and holy lives are the ornaments with which you should adorn it. Let me now deduce from the general lesson two special precepts, and so conclude.

I. The first is this. If this church should be an instrument of edification to you, it should be a source of blessing to others also, even to many who may never worship beneath its roof or see its outward form. When we have ourselves received privileges and advantages from God, our first desire should be to impart of them to those who are less highly favoured than ourselves. Now, there is no district in Calcutta which will

be better supplied than this with all means of parochial usefulness. The organisation of St. James's rivals that of a thoroughly well provided parish in England. Beneath the lofty spires of this church lies a well appointed school, not indeed confined in its operations to this part of the city, but necessarily of greater value to this than any other congregation. Close to the school is a fixed and permanent residence for your pastor, where the poorest of his flock may seek his counsel and help without hindrance or embarrassment. I hear that you intend to complete this group of ecclesiastical buildings, by the erection of a hall where lectures will be given, and other rational and blameless recreations, devised for those who, after the toils of a hot Indian day spent in office or other absorbing occupation, desire some means for unbending and diverting their minds at night. A more important addition to your parochial institutions it would be impossible to make. Now, of these great advantages a portion doubtless will be due to your own liberality and public spirit. But many of them are bestowed upon you from external sources: the church and parsonage from government, the school in a great measure from the contributions of persons not directly connected with this district. Show, then, that you appreciate the blessings thus brought home to your doors by helping to extend them throughout the length and breadth of India. In every part of the land churches and schools and clergy are needed, not only for missionary operations, not only for heathen children and Christian converts, but for settlers, for Europeans, for baptised Christians like ourselves. In the long valley of Assam, through which the sacred Brahmaputra

forces its way into the plains from its unknown source amidst eternal snows, and again on the slopes of the Himalayas, the woodlands of Tirhoot, the rich green meadows of Bengal, there are hundreds of our brethren amassing wealth from the products of the soil, but with no faithful counseller at hand to remind them of the true riches. At every principal station along the numerous railways which now intersect India, there are Christian men and women who are strangers to Christian worship and exhortation, Christian children who are never taught either the love of God or such earthly knowledge as may make them useful to men. The rest of Sunday neglected and profaned, members of Christ's visible Church dying from drunkenness or some other shameful indulgences, young men of strong passions left alone amidst temptation, and but rarel resisting it, hearts turned only to the love of this world and often of this world's coarser and more degrading vices, the name of Christ blasphemed among the heathen, the name of Christian no longer implying whatever is honest, pure, just, lovely, and of good report, but rather the very reverse of all this, such are unquestionably some of the fruits of English civilisation in India. Brethren, shall we not feel shame at these things, shall we not struggle against them, shall we not provide those who are suffering from them with the same remedies which have preserved us from similar perils? Shall the higher, the spiritual, the Christian civilisation of England in India do nothing, while the secular civilisation is producing those bitter fruits which fallen human nature invariably brings forth till the branch of Divine grace is grafted upon it? No, my brethren, let the

services of this day, the thought of this new church and the other buildings, which group or are to group around it, teach us another lesson. *Freely ye have received, freely give.* Send to others the blessings which you have learned to prize yourselves. Let many parsonages, many schools arise throughout India, let many faithful clergy in many seemly churches preach not only to the heathen, but to careless and worldly and ignorant Christians, the unsearchable riches of Christ. For this cause, as most appropriate to the occasion and the congregation, I requested your pastor to divide your thankofferings to-day between those two institutions, by which the Church of England seeks to fulfil its duty to the settlers or sojourners who are scattered about India, either gathered into small communities or dispersed over large districts in isolated houses. One of these institutions seeks to multiply clergy, the other to multiply schools. Both deserve the heartiest and most liberal support: the one has earned it by much good work wisely and liberally accomplished; the other requires it to accomplish the tasks which are set before it. Both, therefore, I trust, will reap the fruits of the gratitude and joy with which you once more occupy a church of your own, and worship in a temple which exceeds the former house of God in this district as much in outward beauty, as it will, I trust and pray, in spiritual glory.

But I must not bring the services of this day to a close without trying, by God's help, to extract one more lesson from them, and to impress upon you a yet deeper and more intimate conviction. If you are to attain any of those happy results which I have tried to set before

you; if *the glory of this latter house is to be greater than the glory of the former house*; if this church is to be filled with hearty worshippers, attentive hearers, devout communicants; if you are to be distinguished as for advantages and privileges, so for bounty, liberality, care for others, and fruitfulness in good works, you must begin with yourselves, the foundation must be laid in the conscious personal devotion of each individual soul to God. I have applied the language of one prophet to the general uses and results of this building; let me quote the words of another in making this personal application of the subject: *Sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself*, says Isaiah; *let Him be your fear, and let Him be your dread, and He shall be for a sanctuary.* Perhaps you will remember the passage better as a part of it is quoted (not quite exactly) by the Apostle Peter. *Be not afraid of their terror* (that is, of the harm with which worldly men threaten you), *neither be troubled, but sanctify the Lord God in your hearts.* In both places the word *sanctify* is used in the sense in which we now commonly employ the word *consecrate*. *Consecrate the Lord God*, or the Lord of hosts Himself in your hearts, and He shall be for a sanctuary. This, brethren, is the truest, the highest consecration—to enthrone God Himself in your hearts, to make Him your Ruler and your Friend, to consecrate Him there, as it were, that is, to acknowledge and venerate Him as your living sanctuary, so that under His protection you may be safe from sin. Let Him, by the glory of His presence within you, expel from the heart which He occupies all unworthy and impure desires; let Him keep you safe from selfishness and passion and vanity, and adorn the temple that is within you with

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all holy thoughts and wishes and resolutions, with all the graces of the Christian character. Then will the worship offered in this material structure ascend up to Heaven as an acceptable sacrifice, being the outpouring of contrite and devout hearts, renewed by the Spirit of Christ. Then will this congregation abound in good works and alms and offerings. Then will the prayers and aspirations of this service be fulfilled in the best and highest sense. Then will the heathen who are around you *falling down on their face worship God, and report that God is in you of a truth.* Then will *all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamour and evil speaking be put away from you with all malice.* Then will your pastor and all who care for you *thank God upon every remembrance of you, being confident of this very thing that He who hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ.* Then will this earthly house of God be to many a weary and anxious soul the *gate of heaven*, a type and foretaste and anticipation of the home there prepared for you by your Father.

SERMON X.

CALCUTTA CATHEDRAL, 1865.

THE SON THE FATHER'S IMAGE.

The brightness of His glory, and the express image of His Person.—Heb. i. 3.

I NEED not detain you long, brethren, on the mere interpretation of these celebrated words. They refer, as you know, to our Lord Jesus Christ, and are intended to describe His relation to the Father. We are told, first, that He is the brightness or splendour of His Father's glory. The word rendered *brightness* means light flowing from a luminous body, and there is little doubt that the framers of the Nicene Creed had our text in mind when they called Christ 'Light of light,' i.e. light proceeding from, or flowing out of, light. So, too, it was employed by very early writers to explain or rather to illustrate how He can be eternal, and yet begotten of the Father, since a ray of light from the sun in the heavens comes into existence at the same time as the sun itself from which it flows by natural process. And we read, secondly, that Christ is the express image of His person. By the phrase 'express image' we are intended to apply to the relation of the Son to the Father such metaphors as the impression of a seal, or a figure

formed in a mould, or an effigy stamped upon a coin. The meaning of the expression before us, viz. 'express image, is rather the essence, or nature (so to speak) of God, and the whole verse tells us that the Son is the Effluence or Ray of His Father's glory, and the image or presentation to us men of His Essence, which is eternal, invisible, divine. God the Father has communicated to the Eternal Word the same Divine essence by which He is God, so that the Word is of the same nature with the Father, His perfect image and similitude, and thus His proper Son. The text, therefore, sets before us in a vivid manner the great doctrine of the personality of God. We are clearly told in it that He is a distinct, separate Being, whose essence and character and will can be revealed or represented to us, that He can be contemplated as it were by our faculties, loved, adored, and obeyed; nay, more, that He has in this way been made known to us, and has distinctly spoken to us in the historical manifestation of His Son, who lived amongst men on earth like any other Person, and thereby proves that God, of whose glory He is the effulgence, and of whose essence He is the image, is a Person also. Perhaps we shall best understand the meaning and importance of this great truth of God's distinct personality, if we call to mind some of those speculations concerning His nature which are opposed to it. The Divinity has been represented as a pervading power animating the Universe, sometimes standing to it in the relation of the soul to the body, as a moving spirit retaining a certain superiority over the mass which it pervades, sometimes absolutely confounded with it; while, again, for creation is substituted the notion of emanation, the world flowing forth as it were natu-

rally from God without any exertion of His will. Sometimes a yet further step downwards has been taken: men have come to fancy that the world itself is a deity, that man with all his sin and corruption, that all nature, brute and inanimate, the slave of man and of creatures inferior to man, that all this is God. In opposition to such degradation of the divinity, the Bible teaches us to believe in a personal ruler of the Universe as the cardinal principle of theology. Our God is not the mere course of nature, nor a blind destiny, nor an animating principle of the world of matter, still less that world itself, but a Person, who cares for us and desires our good, and rules mankind by His righteous and all-wise providence. And of the glory of this God we read in the text that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Effulgence, and of His Essential Nature the image and manifestation to man.

Brethren, I can well believe that some of you have been wearied by this somewhat tedious introduction to our meditations this evening, and may have asked whether I am going to employ the time which ought to be given to practical exhortation by a disquisition on various forms of unbelief. I could almost be glad that you should feel such impatience, as a proof that you believe that the improvement of the heart and life, and not the mere occupation of the intellect, is the true reason for which we assemble in this house of God. But such explanations as these are of importance, for more than one reason. They are plainly necessary if we are to appreciate the full meaning of the portion of Scripture from which our text is taken, and to know what it is which is here told us of our God and Saviour. Again, the

fact that a large number of our fellow-men have been and still are utterly engrossed in such speculations, vainly stretching out their hands and blindly groping after Divine truth, should fill us with livelier gratitude to God who has delivered us from darkness and error by the Revelation of His Son. And, above all, this doctrine of God's personality is so essential to our spiritual life, that we must endeavour clearly to understand what the exact point asserted is, and how it differs from other opinions about God's Nature, in order that we may be able duly to appreciate its direct bearing on our practice. Now, however, let us hasten on, let us see how our practice is in truth affected by it, let us pass from the barren region of metaphysical speculation to the green pastures and comforting streams of the Gospel.

I. First, then, if God is a Person, a Father, a Guide, and Friend who has revealed Himself from the beginning through His Word and at last most distinctly and characteristically in the Incarnation of that Word as the Lord Jesus Christ—who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, then undoubtedly we should seek to love Him with a personal love. No vague conception of Providence, no mere abstraction of the eternal law or principle of Nature, no halting faith in the divinity of whatever we see and by whatsoever we are influenced, no awful dread of an Almighty invisible power, will satisfy or rather can fail directly to contradict the idea of God made known to us in the Bible. We believe in a Person who so loved the world that he sent His only begotten Son. And we, dwellers in the world which He has redeemed by this wonderful act of love, must make it the chief business of our spiritual and inward

life to love Him in return. God is not ashamed to be called our God. Let each of us appropriate this word to himself. Luther has said, in one of his striking aphorisms, that nothing is more comforting and instructive in Scripture than its pronouns. He warns us against saying vaguely, 'Christ died for sins,' and would rather have each personally lay hold of this salvation by saying 'Christ died for *my* sins.' Just so there is a vast difference between the language of many of the more religious among the heathen, 'God is the Father of all things,' and that which we have learned from Christ, '*our* Father which art in heaven.' When Saul had sunk into that abyss of despair which is the appointed end of a perverse self-will, he could only exclaim, 'God is departed from me and answereth me no more,' he no longer felt able to claim any personal share in His care for the children of men. But when David, we do not know precisely upon what occasion, whether when persecuted by Saul or fleeing from the unnatural rebellion of Absalom, or on some other crisis of his chequered life, also felt for a moment as if the Divine aid was withdrawn from him, he still could sustain his faith and love by the personal address to the Almighty, '*My* God, *my* God, why hast thou forsaken me?' and therefore was soon able to pour forth the hearty and hopeful thanksgiving, *I will declare Thy name unto my brethren, in the midst of the congregation will I praise Thee.* And we know what solmen consecration this prayer, addressed to *my God*, received in the midst of yet more awful because wholly innocent suffering. So, too, there is a great difference between regarding the Lord as a Shepherd, and personally laying hold of Him as *my* shepherd, and

feeling that He restoreth *my* soul, and leadeth *me* through the paths of righteousness for His Name's sake. When the prophet desired to speak peace to Jerusalem and to assure her that *her warfare was accomplished and her iniquity pardoned*, he came among his countrymen with the message of strong consolation, comfort ye, comfort ye, *my* people, saith *your* God. And so, brethren, we must realise to ourselves the blessed truth that it is for us, each one of us, with all his weaknesses and follies and sins, that Jesus Christ came down from heaven, for us that the Bible was written; we are those whom God invites to trust Him and to love Him, we are they whom He calls His people and whom He promises to comfort. To feel towards God as towards a Person, that is, a living and ever-present helper, is the necessary foundation of all spiritual religion.

II. And remember, brethren, as a second consequence of this faith in the personality of God, that He is not only a Friend to be loved, but a Father to be reverenced, a Lord to be obeyed, and a Judge to be feared. We are not to abstain from wrong doing merely because we thereby violate the moral law, or deviate from principle, or injure the framework of society, or pollute our own souls—all which motives, however true and important, are after all somewhat cold and lifeless, and do not touch the heart with that earnest devotion which is needed to rouse our fallen nature from its indifference to good, and its propensity to evil. But if we believe that we have to do with a living Person who has so loved us that He gave up His Son to humiliation and death for our sakes, and who is at the same time a righteous God who will by no means clear the guilty, and is of

purer eyes than to behold iniquity, then we are at once roused to a holier life by two of the strongest impulses which can impel us to action—gratitude and fear. We are at once afraid and ashamed to transgress the will of One who has shown himself so tender, so loving, so anxious for our highest good, and who at the same time has the power, and has expressed the determination, to cast into outer darkness every unprofitable servant. My brethren, if we will try by prayer and earnest effort to regard our relation to God in this way, to view Him as One who has manifested in Jesus Christ the effulgence of His glory and the image of His essence, and who is, therefore, a Person watching, guiding, loving, and correcting us with a perfectly righteous will, then certainly life and its duties will assume a new character. As the neighbourhood of any human friend whom we respect and love is a powerful motive to restrain us from evil, so all our deeds, whether open or secret, would be done in the consciousness of God's presence, in the fear of incurring His censure and the desire of obtaining His approbation.

III. Once more, brethren, I would ask you to remember how certain it is that faith in God's personality can alone avail to sustain us in all time of our tribulation. Let me remind you for one moment of the contrast in this matter between the feelings of those who lived in old times without God in the world, and the precepts and principles of that Gospel which is founded on the Incarnation of the Word of God. Listen to some of the lamentations of one who is generally regarded as among the best of the heathen, over the loss of his daughter. Thus he writes: 'I turn over every book in

the library which I can find on the subject of moderating grief. I live without the speech of man; every morning early I hide myself in the thickest of the wood, and never come out till evening; my cheerfulness is lost for ever; by this last cruel wound all others which seemed to be healed are broken out afresh;' and in answer to these lamentations, his best comforter can only tell him to remember how many great cities, once famous and flourishing, are now overturned and buried in their ruins; so that it is unreasonable for him to be shocked because the fleeting breath of one woman has passed away. Compare with these despairing cries and almost sarcastic consolations the words in which the Scripture speaks to us of grief. *Whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness. . . . Wherefore lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees.* You see, brethren, the difference between believing in some blind principle of destiny or chance, and trusting with the heart and affections to a personal God.

And now let me press upon you, in conclusion, some inferences from what has been said. A faith in God's personality revealed to us in Jesus Christ is the core of the Christian system. This it is which must give

strength and cohesion to the whole fabric of our religion and of our practice. Christ, as the personal manifestation of the Divinity, is declared to be the Author and Finisher of our faith; all our worship must be addressed to Him, or through Him to the Father, or rather in His name, trusting, that is, to His merits and mediation and character; to Him every knee must bow; in every office of the Church He is set forth to us as the Way, the Truth, and the Life. In Him we have a perfect model of holy living; we see displayed in Him the whole character, and nature, and essence of God. And this Example of all Goodness is not far away from us, but ever near us by His Spirit as a Friend, a Guide, a Brother who loves us and whom we may love in return. We turn with devout gratitude from abstract conceptions of virtue, from the cold rhetoric of philosophers and the iron bondage of destiny, to this inspiring, softening, sobering, ennobling belief, this trust in the great God and Father of all, as the active Friend and Preserver of His children, who has sent His only begotten Son Jesus Christ, the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, to be their Saviour and their ruler for evermore.

These are the general thoughts which the subject suggests to us; and now let me last of all urge upon you two special inferences. Think what reality and life this faith ought to give to our prayers. It is not uncommon to rationalise away the true conception of prayer, by speaking of it as a practice useful in order to produce a religious influence on the mind of the person praying, to raise his thoughts heavenward, to withdraw

him for a time from earthly interests, to make him sober, thoughtful, devout. No doubt these are blessed results from the practice of prayer; but this is not all that Christians mean by it and expect from it; they believe that in prayer they are brought into personal communion with God; that He then speaks to them *as a man speaketh to his friend*, that they may bring to Him definite wants and petitions, and may be sure that He will not overlook them, but will give to them such relief and help as the case of each requires. The words, *ask and it shall be given you* are meant to be a reality. The love of an earthly parent is a faint but true image of our heavenly Father's care; as the one listens to his children's requests so does the other, only with infinite wisdom, and with the purest love. And, lastly, remember how vividly our faith in the personality of God should be present to us when we receive the Lord's Supper. For in that sacrament the historical facts of Christ's Incarnation and all-sufficient sacrifice are brought directly home to our hearts, and we are united in a holy communion with one another in and through Him of whom we all spiritually partake, and by whom we are all strengthened. At that time, even more than at other times, Jesus our Redeemer and His Spirit our Sanctifier, should be gloriously enthroned within us. Then we should specially feel that Christ is our King, and we His people, and acknowledge the authority which He exercises over us by this devout act of obedience. Then, too, our thoughts are carried forward to the time when God's personality will no longer be a matter of faith but of sight. For in that sacrament

we show forth the Lord's death till He comes, and so our weak and faltering aspirations after the knowledge of God are revived and strengthened by the promise of that day when we shall know even as also we are known.

SERMON XI.

DELHI, 1865.

PROSELYTISM AND CONVERSION.

Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves.—Matt. xxiii. 15.

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.—Matt. xxviii. 19, 20.

THESE two passages, though spoken by our Lord within a few months of each other, and recorded by the same evangelist, appear at first sight to stand in startling contradiction. Their contrast will appear yet more prominent if we translate the second a little more exactly than it has been rendered in our Bible, and substitute, for the inadequate version *teach all nations*, the true sense of the words *make disciples of all the nations*. But by restoring this true sense, though we bring out more fully the significance of the latter passage, we place it, as I said, in more obvious opposition to the former. For a disciple and a proselyte appear at first sight nearly synonymous terms, and it would seem

as if our Lord enjoined upon His disciples the very practice for which he had censured the Pharisees. This we know is impossible, and a consideration of the separate lessons to be learned from each passage, and of the manner in which they must be harmonised, will furnish us, through God's blessing, with a profitable subject for discussion now, and some practical help for our own conversation in the world.

First, then, we see generally that the former passage discountenances proselytism. Now, what is proselytism? Undoubtedly the word has acquired a bad sense; for although etymologically *to proselytise* only means to persuade a person to come to us, yet we really always employ it when we intend to throw discredit on the disciple who has come over, or on the teacher who has persuaded him to come. Just so *apostate*, *traitor*, *rebel*, though all implying censure, mean literally no more than *one who stands away*, *one who goes across*, *and one who renews a war*. For in truth the sense of words depends not on etymology but on usage, and when we say that a man is given to proselytising practices, we mean to express our disapprobation of his conduct. Possibly, indeed, it is this very passage which has affixed a bad meaning to a word in itself indifferent, and therefore by examining it more carefully we shall see in what the fault of proselytising consists. In the verses which immediately precede it, we find that our Lord uttered such precepts as these—*Be not ye called Rabbi* (i.e. my teacher) *for one is your Master* (or Teacher), meaning probably the Holy Spirit, *and all ye are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for One is your Father, which is in heaven. Neither be ye called*

masters (or rather leaders), *for one is your Leader, even Christ.* And the occasion of these commands was the arrogant and self-seeking conduct of the Pharisees: He charged them with doing *all their works to be seen of men,* with loving *the uppermost place at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and to be called of men, my teacher, my teacher.* Plainly, then, their object in *compassing sea and land to make one proselyte* was to swell their own importance and to gain some personal advantage. They liked to be followed by a crowd of disciples who should address them by high-sounding titles, venerate them as their teachers, fathers, guides, and minister daily to their intellectual self-complacency and spiritual pride. We read in writings contemporary with the foundation of the Christian Church, that many of the Gentiles were brought over to Judaism by the most unscrupulous arts, sometimes by actual force, often by the baneful influence of fraud and superstition. Nor did these reckless proselytisers trouble themselves about the moral character of new disciples. At Rome a concubine of the emperor Nero became a Jewish proselyte, without quitting her shameless mode of life. The vices of the Jew were often engrafted on the vices of the heathen. The so-called converts were taught to cast off the ties of kindred and affection. Especially they were encouraged to avail themselves of the law of Corban, and to renounce their obligations to their parents and even to their wives or husbands under pretence that the money which had been formerly used for their comfort was now dedicated to God. No wonder, then, that our Lord speaks of such pretended conversions as these in language of the most withering condemnation, and declares that a

proselyte of this kind became twofold more the son of Gehenna than the Pharisees themselves. And thus we have no difficulty in understanding the general force of our first passage, the mere transfer from one sect or outward form of religion to another, even though the communion which we embrace may be better and teach a purer faith than the one which we have quitted, is not a real conversion acceptable to God. The pleasure which a man feels in aggrandising himself by assuming the position of a party leader, and securing to himself a large concourse of disciples bound to him by the ties of ignorance or superstition or *party* spirit, is simply a hateful form of arrogant self-esteem. Neither force, nor fraud, nor an appeal to self-interest or passion, nor any unworthy motive, is a legitimate method of changing a man's creed. Under the comprehensive word proselytism, all such practices are sternly denounced by the Lord, who on another occasion told His hearers that only the truth, and therefore of course nothing but a sincere conviction of the truth, would suffice to make them free.

We will now turn to the other passage and see what lesson for life's guidance may be extracted from it. Let us listen to it in its more precise translation. *Go ye and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.* We see at once that this making disciples, as distinguished from making proselytes is not to consist in bringing them over into our own sect or party, but into the name of the One God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Moreover, the initiatory

rite by which the disciples are admitted into this All Holy Name is not to stand alone: it is to be followed up by teaching them to observe all the commandments of Christ. For observe that they are to be baptised not *in* but *into* that name, that is, they are intended not merely to acquire a certain amount of theoretical knowledge about the doctrine of the Trinity and the truths involved in it, but rather to feel themselves partakers in the covenant of Redemption, to be received into an actual living communion with the Father, Saviour, and Sanctifier of Mankind. They are to learn from the time of their first admission into the newly-revealed Name of God, or, if they were so admitted in their infancy, from the first dawn of intelligence within them, that they are citizens of a kingdom of truth and righteousness, living under a holy and spiritual law, bound to follow a perfect pattern, and to shape all their conduct according to the precepts of the highest and purest moral code which has ever been enacted among men. Such, then, is Christian discipleship as distinguished from sectarian proselytism, a change not of outward profession but of heart and life, a conversion made not to swell the importance of this or that human teacher, but to glorify the divine Teacher, who is the Holy Spirit of God, an admission of the disciple not into a party or persuasion or religious school, but into a covenanted relation with God through Christ, secured and strengthened by the work of the Spirit, and into an *inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.*

Now I think, my brethren, that the lesson of these two passages may be very usefully dwelt upon by us in

India, Christians as we are in the midst of heathen, called upon constantly to support missionary efforts, and yet sometimes hearing them spoken of in terms of disparagement as a mere form of proselytism. And were I addressing an assembly of missionaries, as it is sometimes my privilege to do, I should not fail to remind them of the warnings which the former passage conveys to us, to tell them that in this pagan land, a common faith in the Lord Jesus Christ should unite us all far more closely than differences of opinion on church government, or on certain parts of Christian doctrine, can separate us; that while each specially loves his own branch of Christ's Church, heartily obeys its law, and seeks quietly but faithfully to carry out its principles, yet his first object must not be to increase his own following, to swell the numbers of his own sect, or to multiply the converts of the particular society under which he serves, but to win souls for the Saviour of all men; that therefore all anger and clamour and evil speaking and mutual distrust should be put away from among us, and that we should all love as brethren, knowing no other rivalry except emulation in self-sacrifice and in the service of God. I might warn them, too, against using in their work any agencies inconsistent with Christian principle, against an undue craving for the aid of the secular power, against encouraging any unworthy motives in those who seem ready to embrace the Christian faith. Nor should I wander from the subject if I urged them to remember the duty of carefully teaching their disciples, after their conversion, to observe Christ's will in its minutest details, so that their baptism into the name of God may be a source of constant

growth in Christian knowledge and improvement in Christian practice. But in such an assembly as this, it would be out of place to dwell longer on these exhortations, since they are not the temptations to which Christian laymen are exposed. Yet, brethren, the passages before us are full of instruction for you, as well as for those who may appear at first sight to have a more immediate interest in them. Suffer me, then, to deduce from them a few lessons applicable to us all.

I. First, then, it is plain that, taking the passages in their combination, the work of missionaries, so far from being in any degree discountenanced, when carried on in the spirit of the Gospel of peace, is not only directly sanctioned but positively commanded as the first and most obvious duty of the Christian Church. Pay no heed, then, to any scornful or sarcastic language about proselytism. Unless such language is ever unhappily justified by any errors of judgment or of heart, into which missionaries themselves have fallen, it is quite inconsistent with a true faith in Christ, and a worthy estimate of the redemption which He has worked out for all mankind. We are taught expressly that missionary efforts must never cease till all the world is evangelised. *Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.* Now, this preaching of the Gospel is no mere effort to enlarge the number of our own partisans; it is the earnest and sincere endeavour to win men over to the service of Christ, and to persuade them to quit the abhorred ranks of Christ's enemy. It is the invitation to pass from sin to holiness, it is the offer of the will and the power to follow after all such things as are true, pure, honest, lovely, and of good re-

port. It is the revelation of a heavenly Father who loves us as His children, of an Elder Brother who surrendered up His life in the work of bringing us back to the home from which we have wandered, of a Spirit who fills the heart with righteous desires and adorns the life with righteous deeds. It is the removal of the veil which shrouds the mysterious future, the disclosure of the life beyond the grave. He who opens his heart to such preaching becomes not the proselyte of any human teacher, but the disciple of the living God. So, then, brethren, the first great lesson which we should all learn from the whole subject is this, to help forward not only by ungrudging contribution, but by life, by example, by sympathy and by prayer, the work of those who are preaching glad tidings of good things, not for their own power or aggrandisement, but for the glory of God. But the two passages in their combination set before us some more special lesson, which I will now briefly enumerate and so conclude.

II. We have seen that the reason why it is so needful to make disciples of all the nations is that the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation, the one remedy for all the ills that flesh is heir to, the one system which satisfies the conscience and teaches the perfection of holiness. Now, brethren, do we in any real sense feel that all this is true? is the Gospel a living power in our hearts? When we are in sorrow, or anxiety, or sickness, do we turn to it as a divinely appointed remedy? Above all, does our love and veneration truly centre round Jesus Christ as a living Person? Is He indeed our Life, our Light, the true Revelation of God, our Friend at once All powerful and full of love? Remember that

unless we do in some measure thus realise the power of the Gospel, any pretended missionary zeal to which we may lay claim is but proselytism, not a burning desire to make others partakers in blessings which we have learned to regard as inestimable, but a mere satisfaction in an increase to the number of those whose outward creed and profession coincides with our own.

III. Next, another reason for missionary effort is the desire that those who are ignorant of Christ's will, may be taught to observe all things whatsoever He has commanded them. My brethren, are we ourselves diligent in our obedience to His will and commandments? Do we truly and practically believe that Christianity means love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, that these are its fruits, the fruits of the Spirit which God gives to those who seek Him in the one way which He has ordained? Do our lives show that through our faith we have become a peculiar people, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, and following no meaner standard and pattern of goodness than the perfection of our Father who is in heaven? Unless we thus appreciate the power and meaning of the Gospel, unless we believe in truth, and righteousness, and purity, and know that they are to be found in Christ Jesus, there seems no particular reason for our desire that all men should be made His disciples.

IV. Once more: the chief cause for which our Lord censured the Pharisees, the real reproach which is implied in the offensive term proselytism is this, that conversions are sometimes undertaken not for God's glory, but to swell the importance of the proselytiser. Now,

though you are not exposed to the literal danger of trying to aggrandise yourselves in this particular way, yet you may well derive from this part of the subject a more general lesson, you may well look into your own hearts, and see whether your prevailing motive in your ordinary life is God's glory or your own. Remember how subtle and how manifold are the temptations of self, whether they come in the form of vanity or of ambition, how inconsistent are pride, and arrogance, and self-sufficiency with that humility and devotion which are the chief ornaments and most prominent characteristics of the true Christian. Learn, then, to desire Christ's glory, to believe that it is promoted by holiness, meekness, truth, and charity, and to acknowledge in His Spirit the one sure source of all self-sacrificing goodness. Then will your zeal for the Gospel be the true zeal of apostolic missionaries, you will desire above all things that men may know of Christ, rejoicing that His work is done, but comparatively not caring whether you or others are privileged to do it, seeing in every disciple won to His cause a soul rescued from sin and misery—a unit in the great multitude who shall surround His throne, and praise Him through all eternity as the Redeemer of a fallen world. It is the custom of the diocese at this Epiphany season, when the Church commemorates the first manifestation of Christ's light to lighten the Gentiles, to stir up the sympathy and liberality of Christians on the subject of missions, and to make collections in the churches for the extension of that light over India. We ask you to contribute to-day not to the particular mission in this city, but to the general work of missions throughout the Presidency, as carried

on by the two great societies of the Church of England. I am quite certain that a man's feelings on this subject are to a great extent a test of the earnestness of his own Christianity. He who appreciates what wickedness is and what holiness is must desire that this country should be turned from the one to the other. He who has felt the love of Christ in his own heart must desire that those who are ignorant of it should feel it also. He who believes that Christ commanded us to baptise and teach all nations must desire to help forward the only agency by which that command is fulfilled. He who reverences self-sacrifice and enthusiastic devotion to Christian truth must be ready to lighten and forward the labours of those who, alone among all professions and occupations in India, show as a class a consistent example of both and are contented and happy to live and die in the service of their Saviour.

SERMON XII.

SRINUGGER, CASHMERE, 1865.

THE ASCENSION.

So then, after the Lord had spoken unto them, He was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God. —Mark, xvi. 19.

Among the various occupations and interests of a season of travelling and recreation, it probably escaped the recollection of some among us that last Thursday was appointed by the Church in celebration of the great fact of our blessed Lord's Ascension. Now the object of observing special times and seasons is, of course, to rouse our thoughts to the remembrance of special truths, and we meet on such occasions in common worship in order that we may offer up to God a common tribute of gratitude and love for a common blessing. Hence, the fact that the public observance of Ascension Day among us here was almost impracticable, should make us even more mindful than in other years of the event which on that day is commemorated, and it is therefore most fitting on this Sunday, while the services still retain many distinct references to that event, when in the Collect we address God as 'the King of glory

who has exalted His only Son with great triumph unto His kingdom in Heaven;' when the epistle reminds us of Christ's return to judge the world in the words *the end of all things is at hand*; when the Gospel speaks of His absence from us, and the promise of the Comforter to supply His place; when the first lessons record the parting exhortations of Moses before that ascent into mount Nebo which foreshadowed, as it were, our Lord's ascension into heaven, we should consider what consolations and encouragement His ascension affords us, and what effects our belief in it produces upon our practice. The time is short for the consideration of a long and varied subject: let us proceed to it at once without further preface or explanation.

I. First, then, and most simply, the Ascension is the completion of the Resurrection, it sets the final seal to the assurance that Jesus of Nazareth, though crucified as a malefactor, was in very truth the *Son of God with power*. Others had been raised from the dead before Him, the daughter of Jairus, the son of the widow, Lazarus of Bethany, had all passed through the dark valley, and been recalled by a voice which had authority to penetrate even to the unknown regions beyond the grave. But each of these was required to perform a second time the same painful journey. Doubtless, death must have been robbed of his sting when he struck down those who had experienced so marvellously the almighty influence of the Lord of life. But still it was necessary that he should be again encountered by them, for they had risen, not through any intrinsic power to *lay down life and to take it again*, but in obedience to the commandment of the great Deliverer; whose Ascension showed that His re-

surrection was essentially different from theirs, and that He, by His own free will and in pursuance of His Father's eternal counsels, had laid down His own life that He might take it again. It thus appeared that He was the Holy One who could not see corruption, and that when He had once overcome the sharpness of death, *it was not possible that He should* again *be holden of it.* He Himself appealed to this as a visible proof of His Messiahship and Divinity. *The Comforter,* He said, *shall convince the world of righteousness: becauseI go to the Father and ye see me no more,* i.e., the fact of My ascension shall be a proof that I am the righteous Saviour chosen by the Father to redeem Israel, and not Israel only, but *to gather into one the children of God who are scattered abroad.* If, therefore, we rightly consider the resurrection of Christ as the crowning miracle of the Gospel, the divinely-appointed and historical proof of the truth of Christianity, we see that His ascension, the fact that He did not die again like those who had risen before Him, that from His very nature He could not see corruption, is the necessary continuation and completion of the chain of evidence. If we are justified in regarding Easter as the chief of our festivals, and the 'sun of other days,' we see that no small portion of its brightness is reflected by the ascension.

II. But let us go a little further into detail. Great importance is attached in the Scriptural narrative to the fact that the Lord Jesus ascended into heaven in human form. The apostles saw Him go up when he had just spoken to them in that familiar voice, and with that familiar gaze which they had regarded with love and reverence, since He first called them to leave their

nets and become fishers of men. They were expressly told that as He went up so also He should return. Now we connect this fact of His ascension in human form with the title 'Son of Man' which is so constantly applied to Him. We observe that this title is frequently used not merely in connection with His past life on earth when He was visibly and audibly a son of man moving among men, but with His present glorified life in heaven, and His future return to judgment. Thus when Stephen was strengthened for martyrdom by a celestial vision, he *saw the heavens opened, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God.* Jesus says Himself that *hereafter shall the Son sit on the right hand of the power of God.* So, too, with reference to the judgment. *The Father gave Him authority to execute judgment, because He is the Son of Man. When the Son of Man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory, and before Him shall be gathered all nations.* And in the passage from which this title *Son of Man* was in all probability immediately derived, Daniel *saw in the night, visions; and behold one like the Son of Man, or rather, a Son of man, came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of days and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages, should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.* Now, brethren, this fact that the Son of Man is our present Lord and future Judge has been revealed to us for our edification and comfort. We learn from it that we have a Friend and a Brother in Heaven. If we look into

ourselves and consider our own weakness, and glance back over our lives and the many sins which have polluted them, we must feel that a great gulf separates us from a perfectly just and holy God. But between us and that awful presence of infinite purity is interposed a Mediator like unto a son of man. *We have not a high-priest which cannot be touched with a feeling of our infirmities, but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin.* Therefore *we may come boldly to the throne of grace,* sure that we shall *obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.* For we know that our King and Lord has carried into heaven the recollections of His human life, and has learned by His own painful but most loving experience to sympathise with those whose nature He has shared, and whom He *is not ashamed to call His brethren.* The child can pray to Him with undoubting trust, knowing that He passed through the temptations of boyhood, that He *increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.* The poor man, in the midst of privation, may remember that his Lord worked as a carpenter, and *had not where to lay His head.* In our struggles with sin we may be strengthened by calling to mind His fierce conflict in the wilderness, and in our times of sickness and pain, above all, in the hour of death, by the thought of Gethsemane and Calvary. Our earthly affections and friendships are sanctified when we remember His special love for Lazarus and John, our earthly joys are at once justified and solved when we think of the feast of Cana. So, too, when we shrink, as we often must shrink, from the anticipation of that *terrible voice of most just judgment which shall devour the adversaries,* from the opening of

the books, the scrutiny of our words and deeds, the account to be demanded of the talents committed to us, we may be comforted and encouraged by the assurance that He who is to judge us *knows what is in man*, and was for this very reason appointed by the Father to decide our eternal destiny. *Ye men of Galilee*, said the two men in white apparel to the wondering apostles, *why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken from you into heaven shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven.* This indeed was part of the Divine economy and plan of salvation, that man's nature should be redeemed from sin and death by a Man whom sin would not lead astray nor death finally conquer; and that then He who had won the victory should carry that nature into heaven, should help His people by His Spirit, should present their prayers to the Father with the efficacious aid of His merciful intercession, should regard them with love and compassion as compassed with infirmity, should give to each of them strength according to their need, and finally come again as the Judge of all mankind thoroughly furnished for His final work by the perfect union of the three Divine attributes of justice, mercy, and knowledge. Above all, in that awful hour, He will not forget the great atonement by which He Himself redeemed us from the power and penalty of sin; He will regard us as purchased to Himself, a peculiar people, reconciled to the Father by His blood, if only we have endeavoured—albeit with weakness and fear and much trembling—to walk as the chosen people of a perfectly righteous Lord. And thus there is the closest possible connection between that clause of the

Creed 'He was made man,' which recites the beginning of his life on earth, and that which declares the end of it, 'He ascended into heaven.' He was made man in order that He might ascend into Heaven and there sit on the right hand of God, and come again to judge both the quick and the dead. This was the cause why it behoved Him *to be made in all things like unto His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself hath suffered being tempted, He is able to succour them that are tempted,* to succour us now, and to judge us hereafter with a perfect comprehension not only of the strength of the temptation, but of the earnestness and reality of the resistance.

III. We have seen, then, that the ascension should strengthen our faith in the Gospel by completing the proof that the mission of Jesus of Nazareth was in truth Divine. We have seen, further, that it ought to exercise a direct bearing over our inward spiritual life, by imparting strength and confidence to our struggles with sin, and by diminishing our fear of death and the judgment by the knowledge that, if our actions are weighed with the strictest justice, our infirmities will also be regarded with the tenderest sympathy.

Let me now endeavour to complete the subject by suggesting to you the reflection that the thought of the Ascension should also help to make us holy by transporting us, as it were, into the very atmosphere of perfect purity. Jesus Christ has gone into heaven. We do not presume to fathom the full meaning of the expression, or to localise that mysterious region in which He

now sits at the right hand of God. We only know that whatever abode is in splendour most august, in purity most absolute, in dignity most sublime, in communion with God most intimate and inseparable, that is meant by heaven and the right hand of the Father; there it is that Christ dwells in stainless majesty, removed, perfectly and for ever, from the most distant contact with corruption. Therefore, brethren, if He whom we profess to love and serve is indeed the inhabitant of such a sphere, and if such is the Father's home in which, as He tells us, many mansions are prepared for ourselves, how surely, like the apostles, ought we to gaze into heaven after Him, to follow Him with thoughts purified from the pollution of sin, with hearts weaned from earthly objects, and with a spiritual vision undimmed by selfishness, and passion, and hatred, and pride! This, you may remember, is the special prayer which we are taught to use on Ascension Day: 'Grant, we beseech Thee, Almighty God, that like as we do believe Thy only begotten Son our Lord Jesus Christ to have ascended into the heavens, so we may also in heart and mind thither ascend, and with Him continually dwell.' If He who is in heaven is indeed our Saviour, our hearts and minds must be heavenly. *Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, we must think of these things.* A pure and loving heart, thoughtfulness for others, comparative indifference to our own pleasure or advantage—such are the sacrifices which we should offer to our ascended

Lord and Saviour, such the incense and adoration acceptable to Him who is at once the Son of God and the Son of man.

But we cannot, brethren, offer these oblations in our own strength and by our own will. We need a powerful, ever present Helper, to purify us from the corruption that is within us, and from the debasing effects of continual contact with the world. Christ has returned to heaven, He is away from us, no longer here among us as among the first disciples, to warn, to rebuke, and to encourage us by His words of Divine wisdom, to guide us by the perfect pattern of His life, to attract us by the pervading influence of His ever-present love. But He will give us (so He has promised) *another Comforter to abide with us for ever.* And this brings us to the final lesson of this Ascension season. In to-day's collect we pray that 'God will not leave us comfortless but send His Holy Ghost to comfort us.' Let us repeat this prayer or its equivalent frequently, earnestly, perseveringly, not with our lips only but with our hearts, not only publicly in the great congregation, but secretly in the privacy of the closet. Without it the many lessons of the Ascension will be put before us in vain. The Spirit of God alone can impress upon our hearts a living practical faith that Christ rose from the dead and now sits on God's right hand, that to us may be opened the gates of the kingdom of God. Without the aid of that Spirit all our outward knowledge of Christianity—our profession of belief in the mystery of His Holy Incarnation, His Baptism, Fasting, and Temptation, nay, even in His Cross and Passion, His glorious Resurrection and Ascension—will fail to supply us with the comfort, en-

couragement, and warning for which they were revealed. The Spirit of God, our Comforter, alone can purify us by the thought and hope of heaven. He will come to us if only we ask Him, and will dwell within us, and make our hearts His Temple, cleansing us from all filthiness of flesh and spirit, and guiding us safely on through this world's snares and pollutions, till at last He quickens to life eternal our mortal bodies also.

SERMON XIII.

MURREE, 1865.

LIFE AND DEATH.

To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.—Phil. i. 21.

THIS is one of those familiar passages which, when one of them is announced as the text of a sermon, sometimes raise a feeling of disappointment in the minds of the hearers. They think that they know all about it, they have often heard it preached upon, perhaps they have often thought of it and taken it to heart themselves. So they make up their minds that they are going to hear a trite enumeration of commonplace truths, and settle themselves into that state of dreamy inattention, which is so often encountered, and so often deserved, by the English preacher.

Yet, well known as the passage is, I doubt whether we are in the habit of regarding it exactly with the feelings which were in the Apostle's mind when he wrote it, and whether we do not in some sort invert his meaning, attaching the most importance to that aspect of it to which he intended to give least. In order to enter into its sense more fully, let us examine its context and the circumstances in which it was written. The cir-

cumstances, indeed, are easy to understand, the context is a little more difficult. We know that when St. Paul wrote his Epistle to the Philippians he was a prisoner at Rome, and moreover that at the time his imprisonment had assumed a particularly severe and even cruel character. In the three nearly contemporaneous Epistles to the Ephesians, the Colossians, and Philemon, we find that he had freedom to preach the Gospel, but in that to the Philippians it would seem that it was preached by others rather than himself, because his bonds were too close to make his own public ministrations any longer possible. Many of the expressions in the Epistle imply that he was living in much distress and anxiety. (The death of Epaphroditus would have caused him *sorrow upon sorrow*: a fresh sorrow in addition to that with which he was already beset.) The Philippians are praised, *because they had communicated with his affliction*; and he had *learned*, doubtless from bitter experience, *in whatever state he* might be, however persecuted, and threatened, and outwardly forsaken, *therewith to be content.* It had long been his principle only to desire Christ's glory, but now he thinks it no less probable that God may be pleased to advance this by his death than by his life. *For*, he says, *to me to live is Christ and to die is gain. But if I live in the flesh, this is the fruit of my labour: yet what I shall choose I wot not. For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better: Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.* It is this latter passage, following and developing the text, which seems to require some little explanation. The Apostle's meaning is, that since to live in the flesh—that

is, his continuance in this present world of trouble and persecution—is to him the fruit of his work, or, in other words, the condition on which depends any fruit of his apostolical ministry, he does not know which to choose for himself; for his desire, no doubt, is to depart, to rest from his labours, and to be with Christ, which as far as he himself is concerned is by far the happier lot; but yet he would not feel justified in choosing it, since to continue his earthly labours is more needful than to bring them to a close, on account of the Philippians and others over whom he watches as a father in Christ Jesus. The point to observe is, and it is perhaps not commonly brought into sufficient prominence in the ordinary applications of the text, that the Apostle dwells more specially and more emphatically on the duties of life, the obligations in which we are involved towards our brethren, than on the rest which remaineth for the people of God. The ordinary use of the passage is as a consolation under the approach of death, its second clause being more commonly brought forward and more earnestly dwelt upon than the first. And it is also to be feared that the whole passage is invested in our applications of it with a different colouring from that which the Apostle gave it. If we ever have regarded death as a gain, and like St. Paul have desired to depart, or if we have used such language to others who are suffering from hopeless sickness or overwhelming calamity, it is because we have felt that life and death are almost equal evils, and that we know not which is the lesser evil of the two: we cannot make up our minds which are more to be feared, the afflictions of life, from which death would deliver us, or the terrors

of death from which life is still preserving us. But it is plain that the Apostle, so far from regarding life and death as alike misfortunes which are equally to be avoided, considers them as great blessings which are equally to be accepted. Personally he prefers death, because his life is full of sorrow, and he has accepted without hesitation the Divine promise, that to depart out of this world is to be with Christ in a better world. And upon Christ, who called Him out of darkness into His marvellous light—who has always stood by him and comforted him in every hour of despondency and perplexity, whom he has been permitted for his encouragement in his great work to see even after the resurrection with his bodily eyes—he has long learned to fix all his hopes and affections, so that to be where Christ is must be, he is sure, eternal happiness and safety. But when he considers his duties to the Church and to the world his desires and aspirations are changed: then he feels that life is preferable to death, because in life alone he has the opportunity of actively serving his Master, of extending His kingdom, and rescuing from sin and error the souls which He died to save. In life alone he can fulfil the task which, with all his heart and soul, he had embraced—to hold up the weak, to heal the sick, to bind up the broken, to bring again the outcasts, to seek the lost. He feels like his Master, *I must work the works of Him that sent me, while it is day: the night cometh, when no man can work.* He recognises the truth contained in the words of Hezekiah, though doubtless those words were spoken without the clear light and true knowledge of the Christian faith: *the grave cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee: they that go down*

into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known Thy truth. Hezekiah indeed failed to appreciate the blessing which God has granted even to death, and so he could not feel that it was gain, but he fully perceived the nature of the happiness which is involved in life. That happiness, he knew, consisted in the praise of God, in making known His truth to those around us, as a father teaches his children. And this happiness was fully shared by St. Paul even in the gloom of his Roman prison. *To abide in the flesh*, he says, *is more needful for you*, and therefore, he implies, more acceptable to me.

There is one feature of the age in which St. Paul lived which makes his language in this place unusually striking and impressive. You will pardon me, brethren, if, for a very few minutes, I digress from the ordinary line of Christian exhortation by an allusion to the history of the time. In these days of unbridled speculation on the holiest subjects, anything which makes us feel more deeply the entire superiority of Christianity to all contemporary morality, and therefore the strength of the arguments commonly used to show that it was no product of the better spirits of the age, but must have come from God, is of value and importance. Now, the circumstance of which I desire to remind you is this, that at the beginning of the Christian era it was, among educated heathen, an accepted principle that anyone who felt life at all wearisome was at liberty to put an end to it by suicide. The instances which prove this are innumerable: those which are best known, of persons who, after a defeat in battle or the downfall of

their political party, terminated their earthly existence by their own act, will occur to some of my hearers at once. But these afford a very inadequate measure of the prevalence of the practice. The first living historian of Rome says that 'self-murder may at this time almost be dignified with the name of a national usage.' We read of one man who starved himself to death, because he was afflicted by an irksome tumour; of another who consulted his physician as to the nature of his disorder, announcing at the same time his intention of killing himself if it should be pronounced incurable; of a third who calmly postponed the day which he had fixed for his suicide, in order that he might have the pleasure of surviving the wicked emperor Domitian, and on hearing of the tyrant's death forthwith proceeded to destroy himself. Nor was it the habit of suicide itself which marked the age and the people so strikingly, as the mode in which it was accomplished, the publicity, the solemnity, and even the ostentation which attended it. Ill health, or the satiety felt by selfish and wilful men of pleasure, were common reasons for resorting to it. Such was the ordinary morality on this subject in that great city in which St. Paul was a prisoner. Doubtless such a view prevailed because the Romans had lost all belief in a personal God, all sense of obligation to Him and dependence upon Him, and were, therefore, unable to recognise life as a heavenly gift to be devoted to the service of the Giver. And never was this great and all-important truth, this central and cardinal doctrine of Christian morals, more impressively stated than when the Apostle Paul—a prisoner in a Roman dungeon, unfriended, forsaken, to all appearance appointed unto

death, and knowing that death would bring him rest and happiness and the actual sight of the Lord for whom he had abandoned all things—could still check any desire for it by the thought, that God might have yet more work for him to do, and yet more sufferings to endure for the good of His Church, by the thought that *to live was Christ, to abide in the flesh needful* for his brethren.

My Christian friends, surely this is a noble view both of life and death. It is altogether pervaded by unselfishness, and sanctified by love, and thus it is a true reflection of the example and teaching of Jesus Christ Himself. Let us try to enter into the Apostle's feeling. Life, he thought to himself, is good, and death is good. Death is good, because it delivers us from the sorrows of this world, and above all, because he who dies a Christian's death never can sin any more. A believer in Jesus Christ, then, ought to regard death as a thing desirable in itself. Do not let us shrink from the contemplation of it: many of us have reached an age when we ought habitually to turn our thoughts to it; all should learn from every painful sickness and every sudden death, which they witness or hear of to remember practically and habitually that the same trial may overtake any one of us at any moment. But it is no less true that we must also feel that life is good, because life is the time for serving Christ, for glorifying Christ, and for imitating Christ. We should try to nourish in our hearts such a sense of duty and such love to God, as to believe that these are the especial objects for which life is really worth having. We should seek for Divine grace that all our power and

faculties and opportunities may be consecrated, devoted, sanctified, to the service of our Lord and Saviour. So says St. Paul in another place, *I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave Himself for me.* This devoted and, so to speak, crucified life, however unattractive it may seem to our sinful hearts and worldly inclinations, is yet the only really happy life, because it is the only one which is sure of help and consolation in those days of trouble which must come upon us all, the only one which can raise us above the world, its anxieties, and feverish hopes, and distracting cares. So, then, brethren, let us love life, let us feel the full beauty and preciousness of life, but let our aim always be to sanctify it by the Spirit of Jesus Christ. Only we must not shut our eyes to the fact that such a view of life is hard of attainment, that it can only be bestowed upon us by the Spirit of God, purifying our hearts and making us new creatures in Christ Jesus. No doubt we ourselves must labour to attain to it; we must check our worldly desires, our pride or ambition, our love of money or pleasure or any other idol which keeps us from the worship of the One Almighty and All holy God; but it is the Holy Spirit alone who, by dwelling in our spirits and making them God's temple, can enable us truly to dedicate ourselves to Christ, and to feel that in life and death alike we are His people and safe under his protection for ever.

And suffer me, brethren, to remind you, before we disperse, that not only are these two clauses separately

true, but that they are also most intimately connected, that the second is the necessary consequence and promised result of the first. Those only have any right to regard death as gain, who feel now that life is Christ. Mere weariness of the world, the satiety of enjoyment, continued ill health, many sorrows and bereavements, may often incline men in modern days to wish secretly for death, just as we have seen that in ancient days they were led by such troubles actually to seek it. But St. Paul's desire for death sprang from no such selfish and unworthy motives as these: he wished to depart that he might be with Christ. And he wished for this and hoped it, and knew in full assurance of faith that he would be with Christ hereafter, because he had served and loved Him here. If death were indeed annihilation, as those old Romans thought, then no doubt we might wish for it in mere weariness of spirit, just as a man might be ready and even desirous to lose a limb which is racked with constant pain. But if through the grave and gate of death we pass to a Resurrection either infinitely joyful or infinitely painful, then it behoves us to ponder well what right we have to appropriate to ourselves the words *death is gain*. Certainly we have no right or title to them unless we are now *living by the faith of the Son of God*, and doubling the talents which He has entrusted to our keeping. But if we are indeed trying to realise in our hearts and in our practice those other words *life is Christ*, if we are seeking to raise ourselves from earth to heaven, to regard time, money, ability, position, influence, as gifts bestowed upon us by the Spirit, to be used in the service of the Lord and of His Church, then certainly we may look forward to

death as a rest from our labour, as the admission to our Father's home, as a departure to that Presence in which is the fulness of joy, and therefore as an infinite gain. So, then, brethren, let us try, each in his place in this world and according to his opportunities, to live more in this spirit, to remember that, if we are in truth members of Christ, as we profess to be, our lives must be spent for Christ and in Christ; and let us try to realise to ourselves, and use for our own eternal good, that great and precious promise in which our text is enforced and expounded—that *neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

SERMON XIV.

MURREE, 1865.

THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL.

For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God.—Gal. ii. 19.

More exactly *I through law died to law.* That is, I died at a definite time, not merely *I am now dead,* though that of course is an obvious consequence, but, I died to law when I became a Christian. When my eyes were opened to see the power of the Lord Jesus Christ, and I determined by God's grace to give up all and follow Him, then, at that particular time, I renounced law as my guiding principle, and I gave myself up to faith in Christ as the ruling motive of my conduct. And I died to law, not to *the law,* if by *the law* readers of the epistle understand the Mosaic law or the Jewish religion, but to the general principle of law, i.e. of guiding my conduct simply by obedience to certain definite commandments and from fear of the penalties attached to the violation of them. A strict and conscientious heathen might say that he died to law when he became a Christian no less than a Jew, though the law which he henceforth renounced as his guide would be the law of morality and natural religion, whereas in the other case it would

be the Old Testament. It is important, then, that we should remember these two things: 1. That the death or renunciation takes place at a particular time (doubtless more or less gradually, as light and knowledge increase, but still in reference to a particular conviction and resolution or series of resolutions); and 2. That the renunciation is of wider extent than the abandonment of Judaism or the Old Testament as our rule of life: it involves a change of principle open to all men.

The text, then, thus interpreted, contains two distinct propositions. The one is that I—that is, any Christian—*died to law that I might live to God*; and the other is that I did this *through*, or by means of, this very same principle of *law*. Of these two propositions the former is comparatively easy, the latter rather more difficult to understand. Each, however, must be separately considered.

I. *I died to law that I might live to God.* It is the difference between the principle of obedience and the principle of love. Now of course love, if the person loved is our superior and one who has a claim to our service, always implies obedience, and produces it; but, on the other hand, obedience may be produced by many other motives than love. Human analogies supply abundant illustrations of this. A slave obeys a master, a subject population obey a tyrannical ruler, a child obeys a harsh and exacting teacher, not from love but from fear or compulsion. It may be said, indeed, that these are not exact analogies; that the Jews were not under the government of a harsh but of a merciful law; that conscience and the rule of morals and natural religion—which all furnished in old times some pale and

imperfect reflections of the light which should one day lighten the Gentiles—were also intended to make them happy, and cannot be compared to the capricious enactments of a tyrant or perverse and self-willed disciplinarian. Still they are useful as illustrating the possibility of observing a rule without yielding up in any way our feelings and affections to him who has enacted it, and as so far proving that a man who is alive unto law, need not therefore live unto God who is the Author of law. But to avoid all misconception, let us illustrate our text from the opposite point of view. We constantly find people—indeed it is to be hoped that the number includes everyone in this congregation—who are dead to some particular laws, that is, who are independent of them, have nothing to do with them, preserve a right course of conduct without the slightest reference to them. Few persons would say that they merely abstain from theft because the law of the land forbids it; from falsehood, or drunkenness, or other gross self-indulgence because they would thereby forfeit the good opinion of society. They are lifted up out of the sphere of these laws altogether, they act upon a higher and better principle: honour, refinement, good taste, and education, all combine to save them almost instinctively from the dominion of base or degrading vice, without any reference to enacted laws or customary prohibitions. So, too, an affectionate son obeys his parents in a dutiful, hearty, and truthful spirit, in many things half unconsciously, as it were, not pausing to think at every moment whether they will tolerate this, or whether the letter of their orders excludes that; but knowing generally what line of conduct will please them and what will cause

them pain, he habitually prefers the one and avoids the other from a loving desire to make them happy. And so those who have died to law that they might live to God, have as it were passed out of the pale of law; their guiding principle is to do God's will and to please Him, and their constraining motive for so trying to please Him is gratitude for the great mercies which He has shown to them in the Lord Jesus Christ. I need hardly say, brethren, that this is little more than another way of stating the great doctrine of justification by Faith. We cannot be acceptable in God's sight because we perform a certain number of actions outwardly right and good, but we must have good principles, and then we shall not fail certainly to perform good actions. This, as we all know, is a cardinal principle of Christian doctrine, and a distinctive feature of Christian morals. God accepts us and regards us as righteous, not for our own works or deservings: for long experience proves that these, even in the case of the most anxiously conscientious man, must be imperfect in His sight—imperfect from their frequent interruption, their mixed motives, their pollution through our inborn and acquired corruption alike. But He regards us as righteous for our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and that faith, if genuine, including as it does love and thankfulness for the greatest conceivable mercy, is sure to produce those good works which He has prepared for us to walk in. This, then, is to be *justified by Faith*, or by God's *grace*, or *by Christ*, to be *accepted in the Beloved*, to *receive the adoption of children*, or whatever other various phrases the Apostle delights to use to express the great truth of our reconciliation to God through the Atonement of His Son. And

finally, in the words of our text, this is to *die to law that we may live unto God.*

II. But we are told further that the death to law is brought about by means of law itself. *I through law died to law that I might live unto God.* How, then, did law teach St. Paul, how does it teach us, to abandon its guidance, and submit our hearts to the sway of a better and holier principle? Perhaps the most common answer to this is that the law of Moses bore on its surface obvious marks of its transitory character. Its prophecies predicted, its types foreshadowed, its ceremonial observances prefigured, the work of one who was to come. The writers of the Old Testament are always looking forward to a mysterious future of greatness and blessing. Jeremiah speaks distinctly of *a new covenant not according to that which God made with Israel in the day when He led them out of the land of Egypt: the law was a schoolmaster to bring men to Christ* by continually assuring them that in Him all God's promises would be fulfilled. Undoubtedly all this is true: the Old Testament does in this way lead on to the New. Just as on the Mount of Transfiguration Moses and Elias departed and left Jesus alone, so the law and the prophets give place to the Gospel, according to the testimony of the Baptist himself, with whom the old dispensation passed into the new: *I am not the Christ, but I am sent before Him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth Him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease. He that is from above is above all.* And yet it is more than doubtful whether this was what St. Paul

intended in the passage before us; whether he meant to say that he was led to abandon the law by the typical and imperfect character of the law. For, as I have said before, his language refers, not to the law of Moses exclusively, but to the principle of all law; to the state, in fact, of living under a law or definite rule—forbidding this, commanding that, threatening with punishment this omission or transgression, encouraging with reward that act of duty. We are inclined, therefore, to look for a more general explanation than one which merely applies to God's imperfect and temporary revelation to Moses—to something which lies deeper in the very nature of man. Nor shall we be long in finding other passages of St. Paul which give a clue to his meaning here. He tells us in one place that *sin is not imputed*, or reckoned, *where there is no law*; in another that *where no law is there is no transgression*; in a third that *by law* (again, not by the Law of Moses, but by law generally) *is the knowledge of sin*. Thus law reveals sin, it brings home to the sinner the fact of his sinfulness, it reminds him of the purity of God's commandments, and shows him his own corruption by the contrast. Moreover, we may add that it even provokes or creates sin; not only because to sin against our better knowledge is a greater evil than to sin ignorantly, but because our fallen nature is so perverse that we are inclined to violate a law because it is enacted, to desire a forbidden object because it is prohibited. And then we read that *the law is the strength of sin*, that *sin, taking occasion by the commandment, works in a man's heart all manner of concupiscence*, and that *without the law sin was dead*. But while law thus reveals sin to the conscience, and provokes it

in the life, it provides no remedy for the sinner. On the contrary, the more it goads his conscience into activity, the more utterly it condemns him, for it keeps ever sounding in his ears the terrible sentence, *Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them: whosoever shall keep the whole law and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill;* and He that gave both these commandments gave many others also; no partial obedience will fulfil the strictness of His law; *whatsoever things are pure, lovely, honest, and of good report,* all these we must follow; the only goal to our struggles is the perfection of the Allperfect. And thus, while law enhances the guilt of sin, it points out no deliverance, no means of escape, no help in the effort to obey the commandment and resist the temptation. But yet, by its very silence and helplessness, it suggests to us that the true remedy against sin may lie elsewhere; it drives us, as it were, to throw off its own bondage: so that, through law we become dead to law, and in this sense, wider and more generally applicable than the other, law *is our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ.* And thus we find that three states or stages of the passage from death to life are put before us by the Apostle. Let us briefly trace their principal features, and then let each member of this congregation consider with his own conscience how far any one of them corresponds to his own condition.

a. The first is that state which may be regarded as *prior to law,* when a man is sinful, but ignorant of sin. St. Paul says that even this condition was at one time his own. *I was alive,* he says, *without law once.* He

may be speaking of his state as a child, or rather, of the whole period, whether it were mere childhood or a longer section of his life, before the law began to work within him, and to arouse the deeper energies of his moral nature. *I was alive*, that is, I lived and flourished in happy unconsciousness of the truth that I was a sinner, a human being forgetting the end and object of my creation, a prodigal wandering from my true home, a child ignorant and regardless of a Father's love. Such also is the state of many among the heathen. Such, too, may be, though I can hardly think it probable, the condition of some here present to-day. It is, indeed, difficult to believe that anyone baptised into the Church of Christ, with the voice of God's truth ever sounding around him, has grown up in unconscious ignorance of the strictness of His law, and of his own alienation from Him. If there are any here who can be said to be *alive without law*, sinning, yet unwarned by compunctious visitings of conscience; useless, self-indulgent and unholy, yet satisfied with their own condition, it is rather to be feared that they have hardened their hearts against law by long-continued disregard of it, than that they have never yet been awakened to a sense of its awful reality. Yet, doubtless, it is just possible that there are some so young, or who have been so miserably neglected, or whose natural disposition is so light, frivolous, and averse to serious reflection that they are living without law because the thought of duty and the fear of God and the sense of sin have never yet been brought home to their hearts. Only, let them remember, if any such there be, that every passage of the Bible which they have heard or read without

attention, every service in which they have joined with wandering thoughts and the mere appearance of worship, this very sermon to which they may listen if they will, every event which has ever happened to them of serious import or impressive warning, is a protest against this death in life, or life in death which they are content to lead. *If I had not come and spoken unto them they had not had sin; but now they have no cloak for their sin; the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge them at the last day.*

b. The second state described by St. Paul is that which may be called *under law.* The sinner now feels the majestic purity of God and the beauty and sublimity of a holy life; he yearns after a better state than that in which he is living, but he knows not how to reach it. Through this stage of religious experience the Apostle also claims to have passed, referring, probably, to his feelings as a Pharisee, when he had begun to be *exceedingly zealous of the traditions of his fathers.* It is impossible to explain this condition more clearly than by his own wonderful sketch of it. Listen to his words—you have heard them often before, you cannot hear them too frequently, or take them home too closely to yourselves: *We know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which*

I would not, that I do. The conscience-stricken man now knows what is right and tries painfully to follow each particular item of God's commandments: he is always passing through alternations of struggle and defeat and repentance and spiritual darkness and despair. His state is one of bondage to law; he has no steady pervading principle to support him in temptation, weakness, contrition, and despondency; he knows of no power external to himself to which he may so trust as never to be confounded, no constraining motive to constant obedience, no atonement by which he is reconciled to God, no assurance of safety, protection, and forgiveness.

c. But at last all these requisites for the Christian life, —pardon, help, reconciliation, fatherly care, everlasting security—are revealed to him in Jesus Christ. Thus by God's great mercy he enters the third stage, which is described as free from law; not certainly because the obligations to serve God and obey law are less imperative upon a man in this condition than upon one who is under law, but because he is lifted up above law, as the principle of his conduct. He has found a better, a higher, a more trustworthy principle, that of faith; of faith, that is, *which worketh by love*, which, having been called into existence by an act of infinite love, must show its reality and its strength by overflowing into a life of love and gratitude in return. This was St. Paul's state after his conversion. *O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from this body of death?* Such was his despairing cry whenever, in the midst of his persecuting violence against the followers of Christ, conscience asserted her supremacy, and displayed to him the sinfulness

of his own heart, and the unattainable strictness of that law which he sought so zealously to enforce on his countrymen. *I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord*: such was the outpouring of his grateful heart, when after that memorable journey to Damascus, perhaps after that time of self-smiting and anxious meditation in the desert of Arabia, he realised the full force of the blessed conviction that *God had made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.*

And now, brethren, we see how a man *through law dies to law, that he may live unto God*, how law itself has led many a humble and pious and anxious spirit to seek for righteousness in Christ, to go to God Himself for the power to perform His will, to abandon the principle of trying to do right through mere conscientious convictions and the cold rules of morality, and to adopt in its place that of offering the heart unreservedly to God, so that faith in His Son may penetrate and purify the life. And now comes the concluding question for each of us: Which is our state? Are we in a condition *prior to law*, through ignorance and neglect; or are we *under law*, desiring to be better than we are yet knowing not how to fulfil our yearnings; or are we *free from law* through our faith in Christ? Or, once more, for a fourth condition is not uncommon, are we hardening ourselves into a contented indifference to the whole subject? I do not indeed mean to say that all men can be distributed among these four classes, at least by any judgment of ours, whatever may be the case when they are regarded by the unerring judgment of God. As there are many varieties in human character, so there

are many shades of difference in religious conditions. Many who are still under law are struggling to escape from bondage; some who profess to know the truth as it is in Jesus are sometimes so grievously inconsistent that it may be doubted whether their assumption of freedom may not involve some self-deception. Others again, who are living such reckless lives of careless self-pleasing that they cannot be called either *under law*, or *free from law*, while yet their unquestionable knowledge of their duty makes it impossible to regard them as in a state *prior to law*, are yet so often visited by pangs of conscience that they are, it is to be hoped, passing under law that *through law they may live unto God*. Still, brethren, in spite of these variations, for which allowance must always be made when we expose the sharp and clear outlines of a Scriptural description to the friction of common life, this picture of the stages through which the greatest of Christ's Apostles passed in his progress to the crown of righteousness is one which deeply concerns us all, and should furnish to all abundant matter for anxious self-questioning and earnest prayer. For indeed the time is short: the Lord is at hand: every one should at least determine on what principles and by what strength he will endeavour to fulfil his life's work here, and with what plea for acceptance he may presume to meet his judge hereafter.

SERMON XV.

MURREE, 1865.

THE FOUNDATIONS OF GOD'S HOUSE.

Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.— 2 Tim. ii. 19.

WHATEVER opinion we may entertain as to the tendencies of the present century; whether we hold it to be as essentially sceptical and ungodly as it is painted by its detractors, or as progressive and enlightened as it is represented by its admirers; whether we applaud its liberalism or bewail its secularity, there is no doubt that we must acknowledge it to be an age of restless activity. The flood of scientific discovery, mechanical improvement, and material civilisation has overspread, as it were, its natural barriers, and rushed into the bordering lands of faith and morality. There is now no question of religion and no truth, however fundamental, which is not made the subject of debate and controversy; doubts and perplexities arise with which our fathers were not troubled; in the raging sea of speculation many gallant vessels are continually stranded, many an honest and good heart which earnestly desires to know

the truth is unable to attain any consistent and well grounded belief; and wicked men are only too ready to overthrow the ancient landmarks in order to carry on their own selfish purposes with diminished restraint. And it will hardly be denied that the distinguishing features and habits of modern society, however much it may in many respects be improved from the days of our fathers—its excitement, its eager competition, the growth of luxury, the spread of commerce, the absorbing amount of work required from so many of us, are at least unfavourable to the development of the gentler and softer and more distinctly Christian qualities in the heart and life, and by no means calculated to make our age an age of faith. They require, therefore, to be counteracted by other influences, since even those among us who are most desirous to believe God, to find their strength in quietness and confidence, are often almost compelled to be careful and troubled about many things, rather than to choose that good part which shall not be taken away from them.

Now, it is important to observe that Scripture more than once seems to anticipate such a state of things, and suggests some of those counteracting influences which are required to correct it. This fact might be quoted as one among the many proofs of the world-wide power and prophetic insight into human nature with which the writers of the Bible were divinely furnished. In the apostolic age, or at least in some of the early churches to which the Gospel was preached, symptoms of the same sort of unrest, perplexity, and controversy, with which we are troubled, were not unfrequently manifested, though arising from different causes and deve-

loped under different circumstances. Such troubles seem to have disturbed the Asiatic church or churches over which Timotheus presided as bishop, and St. Paul, from the solitude of his Roman dungeon—when he was *now ready to be offered and the time of his departure was at hand*—thinks it necessary to remind his friend and disciple that they must be wisely and faithfully dealt with. The verse which I read as my text is surrounded by other verses in which these tendencies are more minutely described. Among those to whom Timotheus ministered were teachers *who concerning the truth had erred, saying that the resurrection was past already, and had overthrown the faith of some.* A warning is given against *profane and vain babblings which increase unto ungodliness,* and also against *foolish and unlearned questions which gender strifes.* The servant of the Lord is bidden to *instruct in meekness those that oppose themselves, if peradventure God will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.* Members of the Church are described as *striving about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers,* and some are even spoken of as *taken captive by the devil at his will.* In the midst of these regrets and censures and exhortations, the text stands out, as containing two sources of consolation and security under every moral and religious perplexity. Let us briefly examine its meaning, distinguish between its two grounds of comfort, and apply it to ourselves.

I. *Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure,* or, more correctly, *the firm foundation of God standeth.* The firm foundation of God is the body of good and faithful Christians, considered as the foundation of the great building which God has erected, the house spoken of

immediately afterwards in the words, *But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour, and some to dishonour.* This God-built house, the visible Church of Christ, is elsewhere described as *built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the head corner stone,* and Christians are compared to *lively stones, built up into a spiritual house.* Here the metaphor of the foundation is a little extended: instead of describing the apostles and prophets as forming the basis of the Church, through their Divine commission, holy lives, and far-spread preaching, St. Paul includes all the faithful people of God, who are seeking to fulfil the purpose of their election, in the foundation on which the whole structure of the Church is raised. Whatever troubles there may be within and around the house, however much *the rain may descend, and the floods come, and the winds blow and beat upon it,* yet its firm foundation standeth; *it will not fall, for it is founded upon a rock.*

II. The Apostle goes on to say, *the firm foundation of God standeth, having this seal.* By the seal is meant the inscription on a seal, and the allusion is to the practice of engraving upon buildings mottoes, and similar brief inscriptions resembling the legend on a signet ring. Thus the Jews were commanded by Moses to write the ten commandments *on the posts of their houses and on their gates.* We have a still more apposite illustration of the text in the book of Revelation, where we read that the twelve foundation-stones of the heavenly Jerusalem are inscribed with the *names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.* Just so the foundation stones of the

building of God which is here taken as an image of the Church, are said to bear two inscriptions, the first being *The Lord knoweth them that are His*, and the second, *Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity*. By these are indicated both the ownership and destination of the building, its ownership as belonging to God, and its destination as designed for the active exercise of Christian goodness; according to St. Paul's statement elsewhere of the purpose for which the Church was founded, *we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them*, that is, we are born again in Christ, and saved by grace from the evil of the world, in order that we may *bear fruit unto holiness*. Of the two inscriptions which thus mark the firm foundation on which the Church rests, the first is a free application of that passage, in the book of Numbers, in which Moses declares God's purpose of separating between the intruding Levites who followed Korah, and the duly consecrated priests of Aaron's line. *Even to-morrow the Lord will show who are His and who are holy*. The origin of the latter inscription is not so clear, for it is even more indirectly quoted than the former. Some expositors direct us to Isaiah lii. 11, *Depart ye, depart ye, go ye out from thence, touch no unclean thing*, which is directly cited in 2 Cor. vi. 17, where intermarriages between Christian and heathen are forbidden; while others, thinking it probable that the Apostle may have had the history of Korah in his mind throughout, would derive it from the same chapter as that to which the first inscription is traced, where, in the twenty-sixth verse, Moses says to the congregation, *Depart, I pray you, from the tents of*

these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs. Those who have noticed the extreme freedom with which the apostles illustrate their arguments by allusions to the Old Testament, sometimes quoting from the Hebrew, sometimes from the Greek version, often entirely from memory, will not wonder that we can find here nothing more than a mere resemblance to the original words whatever they are. Perhaps both texts may have occurred to St. Paul when he wrote the supposed inscription, nor indeed is it absolutely necessary to regard it as a quotation at all. We are told, then, that the firm foundation of God, the assurance of the truth of the Gospel, the security of the whole Church, and of every individual, rests upon a promise and a precept, the promise being that the Lord knows His own, the precept, that those who claim to be His should depart from iniquity. I have called the former passage a promise, though it does not bear that precise form, because it is plain that the assurance that God knows and recognises any one as His own, contains a rich store, not only of present but also of future blessing. Those whom God knows, He will not cease to know, and those whom He knows, He loves. The promises of the first psalm that *he who walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that his leaf shall not wither, and that whatsoever he doeth shall prosper,* are all made to depend upon the fact that the *Lord knoweth the way of the righteous.* So, too, Christ over and over again assures us of the continual care and love of His Father. *Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, neither for the body what ye shall put on, for your Father knoweth that ye have need of these things.* And again, he further speaks of God's

knowledge and care, not only of those who are His by creation and providence, but of those who are bound to Him by the closer ties of redemption and election and a living communion with His Church. *Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom. My sheep hear my voice and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than I, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.* Viewing the first inscription in the light of such passages as these, we learn from it that God is no unconcerned spectator of human affairs, no mere architect of the universe who having fashioned the world and launched it into space leaves it, like a clock, to proceed mechanically till it stops, and having once breathed into man's nostrils the breath of life abandons him to his own impulses and devices; but that He is a Ruler as well as a Creator, a Father, not only because the laws which He framed brought us into being, but because He watches over us with providential care, and because He so loved the world that He gave for its redemption His only begotten Son. This, then, is the promise or assurance in virtue of which the firm foundation of God is unshaken.

And the precept follows from it. *Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ*—that is, who acknowledges Christ to be his Lord and Master—*depart from iniquity.* Christ is the Son of the Father who knows them that are His, the Elder Brother of the Family, who like the Aaronic priests of old are especially called to holiness and purity. If therefore we name His Name as the Name of our Captain, we must follow Him in the path of holy obedience to the will of *His Father and our*

Father, His God and our God. We are told that in the great house which is built on the sure foundation, there are various instruments, some used for honourable and some for dishonourable purposes, some precious, of gold and silver, some base and worthless, of wood and earthenware. Those which are devoted to vile uses are not really God's although they are in His house. They who are His will show their union with Him by their lives, will prove that they truly name the Lord as their Lord by departing from iniquity. And thus we come to this general explanation of St. Paul's words: he reminds Timotheus that the safety of the Church and of all its members rests on two things, first the love and care of God, and secondly the holiness of His professing people.

And now, my brethren, I think that we shall all feel that these two principles, faith in God's love and holiness of life, are also the sure and sufficient correctives for the perilous tendencies of our own age, its restless excitement, its hidden or professed unbelief, its eager pursuit of wealth and power and worldly advantage. I do not mean that they are the only remedies required. So far as modern scepticism results from intellectual difficulties, these ought to be charitably considered and carefully removed. Nor, indeed, in spite of what is sometimes said by people who find unbelieving books more racy and exciting than Christian books, and therefore welcome the one while they overlook the other, has there been any reluctance to meet such intellectual difficulties with calm and thoughtful solutions. But no one who either knows the plague of his own heart, or observes what is passing in the world around him, can

think that intellectual doubt is at the bottom of the troubles and perplexities of our time. When any one of us feels estranged from God, cold, indifferent, and unbelieving, this alienation does not generally arise from any doubt of the historical truth of Scripture, but from neglect of prayer, or the indulgence of an unloving spirit, or of some evil temper or sensual passion. Doubtless a feeling of incredulity very often overspreads the understanding at the same time that this cold indifference freezes the heart, but the two are rather parallel than successive in their assaults, both are effects of the same hidden cause. Nor do I deny that with some minds intellectual unbelief is an original temptation, and with others a calamity arising from the fault or neglect of parents, friends, or teachers, or from other unfavourable circumstances. But still such unbelief as this is not the most common case; far more frequently men cease to believe in God because they cease to love Him, because they never think about Him, because they neglect His ordinances or because they have become so completely the slaves of ambition, or worldliness, or vanity, or self-indulgence, or some other form of sin, that they have an interest in persuading themselves that His Word is untrue. *An evil heart of unbelief* is more generally a covert description of infidelity than a perplexed and troubled mind. So our Lord Himself has taught us. *How can ye believe*, He said to the Pharisees, *which receive honour one of another and seek not the honour which cometh from God only?* How can ye believe, He would doubtless say to us, who live willingly in a state of separation from God, and who rarely seek Him in prayer, whose hearts are set on gaining this

world's comforts, and clouded by the dark mists of selfishness and passion?

But in any case, both for those whose difficulties arise from the intellect, and for those who disbelieve through carelessness or sin, there are two great primary truths to which in our best hours our hearts and consciences respond, and to which we must return for peace and safety as marking the foundation of faith and holiness. These are the very same which St. Paul here preaches to the young ruler of the Church of Ephesus, as the remedies for the troubles by which his oversight of it is disturbed. The one is a simple belief in God as a loving Father; the other is a conviction of duty, an assurance that God *loveth righteousness and hateth iniquity*, and that He desires us to follow after the one and to depart from the other. However far we may have wandered from the right path and abandoned religious habits, we cannot always avoid the feeling that there is a Power and a Providence above us, that there is a world beyond this world, an Almighty Ruler whom we cannot see, but who has assured us of His Presence by the testimony of conscience within us, and by many signs of His goodness around us. Nor can we fail to think it at least quite consistent with such power and goodness, that He who thus rules the world should have made known His will to it by a direct Revelation, and chosen men for union to Himself by closer and dearer ties than those of nature. And until we are actually hardened in iniquity and held in fast bondage to the god of this world, we cannot but sometimes feel compunctious visitings of self-reproach when we abandon good and holy habits, or give ourselves up to any secret or open sin. Nor can

we doubt, if only we will try the experiment, that the more we pray to God, the more truly we realise His love, the more we practise what He has commanded, the surer is our faith in that Revelation by which His will is made known to us. Again, reversing the picture, we must also feel that our faith in God and Christ diminishes as our prayers become rarer and less earnest, our practice more careless, and our hearts more bent on pleasing ourselves. Then let us listen once more to the teaching of our Blessed Lord. *This is the condemnation, that light* (that is, Christ the Son and Word of God) *is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.* Or, in other words, he who is single-hearted and desirous to know and do God's will, comes to the Light of Christ's salvation, that He may be carried onward in this spirit of truth and singleness of aim to higher degrees of communion with God. So, then, brethren, in every hour of darkness and perplexity and temptation; or again in the day of abundant prosperity, when the world and self are strong within us and seem likely to separate our hearts from God, 'in all time of tribulation, in all time of our wealth,' when carried along by the excitement of business or pleasure or study or society, let us ever keep fast hold on these two foundation truths, that God knows and loves His own, and that if we desire to live in the fellowship of the Lord Jesus Christ we must *depart from iniquity.*

SERMON XVI.

MURREE, 1865.

FUTURE REST.

There remaineth therefore a rest for the people of God.—Heb. iv. 9.

It is not my intention to detain you by examining the context of this most comforting assurance, for in truth, though its meaning is sufficiently plain, the argument which leads up to it is not a little intricate. The writer of the Epistle has been warning the Hebrews not to fall into the same condemnation as their ancestors, and to exclude themselves by unbelief from the rest or Eternal Sabbath (for the literal sense of the word is Sabbath-keeping) which God had promised to His people. That promise, he assures them, is still sure, and has never been withdrawn. The Gospel or good tidings of God's love and favour, preached to the Jews from the beginning of their national existence, had been repeated emphatically to the men whom he was addressing. It had been forfeited by those to whom it was first offered by their want of faith. When the work of Creation was finished, God entered into His rest, and designed in His mercy that men should share it with Him. We need not recapitulate

the history of Adam's fall, of man's alienation from God, and the renewal of the promise to Abraham, Isaac and Moses. But the first generation of Israelites in the wilderness sinned against Him so grievously that they too were excluded from the intended boon. The next generation was indeed admitted into the earthly rest of Canaan, but this earthly rest was only a type of the heavenly rest or Sabbath, it was by no means its completion or reality. Had it been so, had Joshua (called in this chapter by the corresponding Greek name of *Jesus*) in leading them into Canaan accomplished to the full God's merciful purpose for His people, then the warning would not have been repeated centuries afterwards in the time of David. *To-day*, now, though Canaan has so long been won, *if ye will hear God's voice, harden not your hearts*, lest the same condemnation fall on you which was decreed against your forefathers who provoked Him in the wilderness. It is plain, then, the sacred writer argues, that the transitory rest of the promised land was not the Sabbath-keeping which God offered to us from the beginning, and into which at certain intervals He continually invited His people, but that *there remaineth* still *a rest*, a holier and more lasting Sabbath than any earthly time of refreshment—however consoling and invigorating, a better land than any earthly country—however rich in natural beauty and material wealth, *for the people of God.*

We need not tell a Christian congregation that this rest is reserved for us in heaven, when the turmoils and sins of this present life are over. It has of late become more or less the fashion among a certain class of writers rather to discourage the contemplation of this promised

Future. With some the objection to the subject doubtless arises from a secret disbelief in it; having no sure hope of immortality they are content that their moral and spiritual vision should be bounded by the horizon of this world. But perhaps sometimes the objections to it rest on a somewhat better foundation. It is urged that our duties are with the present: that whatever God may design for us hereafter there can be no doubt that He intends us to serve Him here. It is allowed on all hands that this is the time for work, that the rest which preachers speak of is one *which remaineth for the people of God*, i.e. one which is stored up among the mysteries of the future. The great object of Christian exhortation, then, it is maintained, should be to make men 'serve God faithfully all the days of their life,' to direct them to a help in present trouble, to give them a strength in present temptation, to nerve them for the fulfilment of present duty. The future, continue such reasoners, is in its nature uncertain, the present is alone our own. And doubtless if Christian preachers ever do dissociate the thought of future rest from that of present work, if they ever observe such views of the great Adjudication as are given in the parable of the virgins who slumbered and slept with no oil in their lamps, of the servant who *buried his talent in the earth and hid his Lord's money*, of those who neglected Christ by turning away from the stranger, the naked, the sick, the captive and the hungry, they are guilty of not *rightly dividing the word of truth*; they encourage a dreamy, unpractical, selfish view of religion; in denouncing worldliness they only substitute for it what has been called 'other worldliness;' they make the moving spring of the Christian's

life to be, not gratitude to God for the gift of His Son, not the *faith which worketh by love*, but the mere desire of a personal advantage, the simple postponement of a life of ease and enjoyment from time to eternity. Such a thoughtless and unworthy style of preaching or writing is indeed, to say the least, exceedingly rare, for generally it is notorious that those who look forward most earnestly to the Christian's rest in heaven, are also most devoted to the Christian's work on earth. On the other hand, the hope of immortality is surely calculated and intended to cheer us in sorrow, to nerve us for suffering or for labour, so that it is often from its direct practical results very good for us to dwell upon it. How should we bear the loss of those nearest and dearest to us, unless we could believe that we should one day meet them again before the throne of God? In times of sickness, of worldly loss, of disappointment, we need to remember the promise that the Lord God will one day wipe away all tears from our eyes, *and that there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.* We should be more elated and made more arrogant than we are by success in life, were we not sometimes reminded that the highest honours here are as nothing when weighed in the balance with that *crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give to all who love His appearing.*

A time of earthly rest and refreshment will be doubly blest to us if we learn to regard it as a type and shadow, permitted by our merciful Father, of the eternal rest which *remaineth for His people*, and therefore when it is beginning pray that we may use it thoughtfully and

unselfishly, and when it is ending go back to the *burden and heat of the day* invigorated by gratitude and hope. Even a time of mere temporary separation from friends whom we may hope in the course of God's providence to meet again in this world, should remind us that this mortal life is full of changes and chances, that here is not our rest or continuing city, and thus direct our thoughts onward to the day when we shall be parted from them by the chilly waters of Jordan, and either pass ourselves, or witness their departure into the promised land beyond the river. God grant that, if such thoughts do occur to us, we may not flatter or deceive ourselves in expecting that we shall indeed share with them the promised rest of Caanan, but rather may cling so firmly to *the Author and Finisher of our faith*, that we may never loose our hold as He guides us to the heavenly shore.

Hence, it is often good for us humbly, hopefully, and thankfully to dwell in thought on *the rest which remaineth for the people of God.* But when we try to pierce the cloud which hangs over it, we must acknowledge at once that the revelation of it which God has been pleased to grant is but general and indefinite. We are told enough indeed to satisfy our faith and animate our efforts, but nothing to gratify our curiosity. So far God has undoubtedly borne testimony to the truth that this world is the scene of our probation and of our duty, that our activity of feeling, interest, intellect, and labour must at present be concentrated here. Still He has also told us enough to show that He intends us to use the thought of the next world for our strength and consolation. And, first of all, we are taught that the next life will be a condition of bodily activity. This follows from the truth

that all men will rise again with their bodies. We cannot indeed comprehend now the nature of the organisms with which we shall be endowed: in the mind of God there exist forms of creation and powers of transformation of which we have neither experience nor conception. *Flesh and blood* indeed *cannot inherit the kingdom of God;* and as *all flesh is not the same flesh, but there is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fishes, and another of birds,* so *there are also celestial bodies, and bodies terrestrial: the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another.* Only the fact that the celestial tabernacle with which we are to be clothed will be a body, proves that the rest of the next world will be no unsubstantial dreary existence, but that we shall have powers and faculties to use in God's service, just as we may now offer and *present our bodies to Him as a living sacrifice*; that we shall be occupied in some employment congenial to our renewed feelings and inclinations, such as even now affords to anyone of active mind the truest and most refreshing rest. We read further that *there is a natural body and there is a spiritual body*; that as we have now a body fitted to discharge the wants of our earthly nature, so the body which we are to recieve hereafter will be one altogether adapted to execute the will of a glorified spirit. And since our future bodies are to spring from our present bodies, since that which *is sown in corruption will be raised in incorruption*, just as the seed develops into the plant and flower, the fircone into the glorious trees which clothe our Indian mountains, we see further that there will be a close connection between our present and our future selves, and that our identity will be entirely preserved. Surely this thought is

important enough to satisfy the warmest advocates of practical preaching, for it teaches us to regard our present bodies with a religious reverence and therefore to be careful of defiling them by impurity or excess, lest they contract a taint of moral as well as physical corruption, and become unfit to be the seed of bodies which shall share *the inheritance of the Saints in light.* That article of the Creed which we often repeat so heedlessly, 'I believe in the resurrection of the body,' may afford us, I think, ample subject for thought and self-scrutiny, and suggest to us the sanctity and importance of these outward frames and bodily powers which we are apt to connect wholly with this world, but within which, if we regard them and use them as we ought, the Holy Ghost does not disdain to dwell.

A second point which is clearly revealed to us in Scripture as to our future rest is that we shall actually see God. No doubt, a good Christian who loves the Lord Jesus Christ, who studies His will, and follows His pattern, already looks upon God with the eyes of his spirit: *he that hath seen Me,* says Christ, *hath seen the Father.* But in the life to come he will have a more distinct and continual vision of God, undimmed and uninterrupted by the mists with which the world and the flesh now cloud his gaze. *Now we see through a glass darkly, but then face to face.* The angels, we are told, look upon God in a more real manner than is at present permitted to us. And thus they are called God's angels, and at the same time our angels: God's angels because they have never deserted Him but are always ready to do His bidding; our angels because, when we are *delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into*

the kingdom of God's dear Son, we are fellow-citizens with them in that kingdom, and receive their ministry as *heirs of salvation.* Thus the Lord Jesus has said: *See that ye despise not one of these little ones, for I say unto you that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven.* As, then, while they are doing us service, they behold Him with a vision of which we are incapable, so we, too, shall one day look upon Him, and this sight will, by some mode of operation which we can now but faintly comprehend, change us into His likeness. For St. John assures us *that when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is.* And St. Paul: *As we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.* And this sight of God will include a perfect knowledge of Him. *Now I know in part, but then shall I know even as also I am known.* Indeed, the Divine vision will pervade every part of our heavenly dwelling-place: we shall behold God everywhere. We read in the Revelation that when the celestial city came down into the renovated world, *prepared as a bride adorned for her husband*, to be the eternal mansion of His redeemed, the apostles saw that *it had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it, for the glory of God doth lighten it, and the Lamb is the Light thereof.* His presence will pervade the entire abode of His saints; He will be to us known and manifest in such a manner that He will be seen by us in each other, seen in Himself, seen in the new heaven and the new earth and in every creature which will be therein, seen wherever the purged and quickened eye of the spiritual body can penetrate. Thus, too, in Him we shall know one another, and be united to one

another with a different tie from that which has bound us together on earth. Unkind feelings and rivalries will disappear when all men and all things are seen in the light of the Divine presence. The Apostle uses this prospect as an argument against hasty judgments now. *Judge nothing before the time*, he says, *until the Lord come, who shall bring to light things of darkness, and make manifest the counsels of the heart: and then shall every man have praise of God.* Moreover, from this portion of the revelation of the future—that we shall then behold the face of the Father and see all things in Him, we obtain a moral teaching in reference to the present life, no less practical and tending to holiness than that which we gained from considering the Resurrection of the body. If we are to see God hereafter, we must be preparing now for that extension of our capacity. The unclean cannot contemplate the pure; the eye that is darkened by disease or particles of earthly matter cannot bear the brightness of the daylight. And so our vision must be purged by faith and purity. Faith is contrasted with earthly sight as giving us the power of walking spiritually and seeing our way before us. *Blessed are the pure in heart*, says our Lord, *for they*—they alone, because they are fitted for the sight—*shall see God.* And so, again, St. John: *Every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as Christ is pure.* We must not raise our hopes and aspirations to the rest which remaineth for His people, without asking ourselves whether, by growing in faith and purity, we are daily gaining the power of appreciating and enjoying its blessedness.

And this leads me, brethren, to one last consideration, which will complete the proof of our assertion that it is

only through his own sin and folly that any man ever dares to look forward to that rest in an unchristian, unpractical way, or by the contemplation of the mysterious hereafter obscures his desire to fulfil his duty here. So far from being unconnected with our present life, we are distinctly told that it is a continuation of it, that the peace of heaven may begin while we are still on earth. In the great intercessory prayer by which Christ, as our eternal High Priest, consigned His faithful followers in all ages to the love and blessing of his Father, He spoke these ever-memorable and most instructive words: *This is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom Thou hast sent.* Now, as the knowledge of God and Christ unquestionably begins here, so, also, to those who seek that knowledge eternal life will begin here; they will have a foretaste and anticipation of the peace and rest of heaven. And a similar truth may be learned from the words of St. Paul: *We all with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.* By gazing on Christ's glory, that is, on His character, His purity, His truth, His meekness, His love, even now when we can see it only dimly reflected as from a cloudy mirror, we begin to be changed by His Spirit after that true Christian pattern which, as we are assured, will be perfectly attained when, without a glass or other dark reflection, we shall see His face. Here, then, brethren, in the midst of this world's cares and temptations and anxieties and duties, we are to prepare and fit ourselves *for the rest which remaineth for the people of God.* Here we gain that knowledge of Him which is life eternal;

here we may, if we will, be changed by His spirit from one degree of glory to another till we are ready for admission to His presence. Do not, then, let us cast away by carelessness and sin so bright and rich a reward. Let the thought of the life that is to come often rouse us to a more careful diligence in the life that now is. Let the hope of perfection hereafter console and warn and strengthen us in dealing with the imperfection which is within us and around us here. In that rest to which we are hastening, or from which we are wilfully separating ourselves, true honour will be withheld from none who is worthy, nor given to any who is unworthy; which the unworthy cannot seek to gain, since none but the worthy can enter the heavenly city. There, too, will be true peace, since no one will suffer evil either from himself or from another. The reward of holiness will be the Author of holiness, who has promised to the holy the sight of Himself, than which nothing can be better or nobler. There also will be perfectly fulfilled the ancient promise, *I will be their God, and they shall be my people.* He Himself will be to them whatever men most laudably desire—life, safety, food, abundance, glory, honour, peace, and every other blessing. For thus only can we understand the hope of the Psalmist, *When I wake up after Thy likeness, I shall be satisfied with it,* and the promise of the Apostle that *God will be all in all.* He will be the end of our desires, who will be seen without interruption, loved without change, and praised without weariness. To Himself, and to His promised rest, may He in His mercy vouchsafe to bring us, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

SERMON XVII.

DEHRA GHAZEE KHAN, 1865.

THE CITY AND TEMPLE OF GOD.

And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.—Rev. xxi. 2.

Of all the selections from Scripture which it is customary in this diocese to read in the service for consecrating churches, none is more striking than the second lesson, containing the description of that heavenly city whereof all material churches are imperfect types and shadows, and into which all living Churches of men and women must pray and strive to be admitted. With this description St. John closes the great vision which was revealed to him in the Spirit on the Lord's day in the lonely isle of Patmos. The history of the world and the Church leading up to the final judgment had been unrolled before him in some of its most striking features, in such a way that, without prying into the *times and seasons which the Father has put in His own power*, we might be instructed as to the general signs of His coming, and comforted when our faith is weak and the power of evil triumphant, by the assurance that

the Lord is not slack concerning His promise as some men count slackness. So when *the first heaven and the first earth had passed away,* the Apostle was permitted to see *the heavenly city, new Jerusalem, the Jerusalem which is above* (to use the language of his fellow-labourer St. Paul) coming down from heaven in radiant beauty to be the abode of Christ's Saints. A voice from heaven proclaimed that as once God had obscurely manifested His Presence in the tabernacle in the wilderness, He would now actually dwell or tabernacle among men, and *they should be His people, and He would be their God,* God with them, the name Immanuel being then realised in its full significance. Tears and death and sorrow were to pass away: Christ's redemption was to be completed by Himself, who is *Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End,* the Unchangeable and Eternal, by whom the old was and the new shall be, and who was now to accomplish His promises and His threats, admitting all who in His strength had conquered sin to the glories of the new Jerusalem, and excluding from it the cowardly, the polluted, the unbelieving, the idolater, and the liar. We must not linger too long over the gorgeous picture which follows. The city is planted on a lofty rock, just as the earthly Jerusalem had towered over the valley of Kedron, and an angel comes down to measure it with a golden reed, using in this particular case (doubtless to make the plan of the city clear to John's mind) the measure current among men. The height, breadth, and length were found to be equal, (the rock being of course included in the height of the city) the whole circuit of the four sides being twelve thousand furlongs, and the height of the wall alone

above the rock one hundred and forty-four cubits. The exactly square or rather cubical form of the city is obviously a figure of perfection, and the dimensions assigned to it are multiples of twelve, in allusion to the twelve tribes, whose names are inscribed over the twelve gates, and to the twelve apostles, of whom one protects each of the twelve foundation stones of the wall, one vast stone forming apparently a basement to the portion of the wall joining two gates. The materials are also symbolical, though we cannot accurately trace the meaning of each. As at the commencement of the vision in the fourth chapter of the book, the sight of *Him who sat on the throne* is likened to the jasper *clear as crystal*, the emblem of God's purity, to the fiery sardine or cornelian representing His justice, and the refreshing green of the emerald typifying His mercy, so in this chapter the same three mystical stones are among the foundations of the wall. Gold, too, such as is wrought from no earthly mines, but of a preternatural transparency, like fine glass, takes the place of stone in the heavenly fabric; and the twelve gates are twelve pearls symbolising by their spotless whiteness the exclusion from the city of everything *which defileth or worketh abomination or maketh a lie.* No temple is erected in the city, its inhabitants need no place of worship or sacrifice, for the object of all worship, He who has promised to be the Sanctuary, the dwelling-place, the refuge of His people is among them, and the great sacrifice is eternally present: *the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city has no need of the sun, nor yet of the moon, that they should shine on it: for the brightness of God's Presence*—the Sheckinah once more vouch-

safed to His saints—*did lighten it, and its lamp was the Lamb. And the nations shall walk by means of its light.* The city thus illuminated by the indwelling of God and Christ shall itself serve for sun and moon to the regenerated world, *and the kings of the earth,* no longer hostile to Christ, *bring their glory into it, and its gates shall never be shut by day,* that is, shall never be shut at all, *for* it will always be day, *night will not be there, and men shall bring the glory and costliness of the nations into it.* This assurance, according to its most obvious interpretation, coupled with that which follows in the next chapter, that *in the midst of the street was the tree of life, and that its leaves were for the healing of the nations,* throws a ray of light on one of the darkest secrets of redemption, and seems to show that some who when in the flesh never formed a part of Christ's visible Church, will be saved at last through the far-reaching efficacy of His Atonement.

Such, brethren, was the majestic vision, such is the brilliant imagery, which represented to the last of the Apostles, and through him to us, the future splendour of the Church or City of God. But this heavenly Jerusalem will not be founded for the first time at the consummation of all things: it will only then be transfigured by the light of God's Presence and the glory of His Saints, into the state designed for it from the beginning. For indeed the city of God has always been in existence. Before the creation of mankind, angels and archangels were its denizens, and when the Creator *breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life,* He added him also to the muster-roll of its citizens. Had sin not entered into the world and *death by sin,* the holy city would have included in its ample circuit the whole race

of men. The earthly and heavenly commonwealths would have been identical: it would not have been said that *the kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of the Lord and of His Christ*, for they would never have ceased to be so. But God bestowed upon man the blessing of freewill, knowing that the highest excellence, such as He designed for him whom He had made in His own image, can only be attained through a struggle against temptation; for victory is a great achievement which disciplines the character, innocence is only a gift which leaves it undisturbed. Man misused the blessing and fell, and so the city of God was separated from the city of the world. But though it was no longer of the world, it still remained in the world. We hear of it continually in Scripture. *Glorious things are spoken of thee, O city of God.* And again in another Psalm: *Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of His holiness. As we have heard, so have we seen in the city of the Lord of hosts, in the city of our God: God will establish it for ever.* And once more: *There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacle of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early.* The city of God, then, has never ceased to be established among men. God's Spirit has continually enrolled His elect among its sons and daughters. The catalogue of them extends from Adam's time to our own, and will not be complete till the day *when judgment shall return unto righteousness.* When Cain sought to destroy it, and founded the commonwealth of this world in his brother's blood, a new son was given to Adam to be the progenitor of a holier race.

When the earth was baptised and purified in the waters of the flood, the earthly representatives of the heavenly city were reduced to eight persons under the headship of Noah. And once more: when the citizens of this world had reared up their Babel against it, when they were dispersed to make war upon each other and waste their strength by internecine strife, the city of God was again confined to one family, its promises were all centered in the person of Abraham. He was selected to be the source of a blessing as wide in its restoration as the fall had been in its destruction, the father of a spiritual seed, that is, of all who should walk in the footsteps of his faith, so that in him *should all the families of the earth be blessed.* So the heavenly commonwealth expanded first from a household to a nation, the earthly Jerusalem became its type and outward manifestation; there a faint foreshadowing of God's glory was for a time visibly present; there priests offered sacrifice in anticipation of the great atonement, and prophets taught the people to walk according to the law of the Lord, who had chosen them to be His own. And during all this time the predictions of the great deliverer who was to extend this glorious citizenship to all mankind grew clearer and clearer: the Psalmist spoke of a king *whose throne was for ever and ever,* and of a Lord who should *sit at God's right hand till His enemies were made His footstool*; Isaiah of *a Man of Sorrows* who should *see of the travail of His soul and be satisfied*; Joel of a time when *the Spirit should be poured upon all flesh*; Micah of an everlasting Ruler to come forth from Bethlehem; Jeremiah of *a Branch* or shoot from the stem of David, *whose name should be the Lord our Righteousness*; Daniel of *a Prince who should be*

cut off, yet not for Himself; Malachi of *the Sun of Righteousness arising with healing in His wings.* At last the crisis came: *the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us.* The whole course of human history began at once to flow into a new channel, and the city of God, founded long ago in heaven, designed from the first to be as wide as the world, contracted for a time into narrow limits through man's perversity and sin, once more opened its gates to receive all who would enter in; *the sons of strangers* began to *build up its walls, and their kings to minister unto it,* and to call it henceforth *an eternal excellency, the joy of many generations.* This is the commonwealth, brethren, of which we have been made citizens by baptism, and in which we must realise our citizenship by faith and holiness. It may often be outwardly scorned and buffeted by the fury of its enemies; it may sometimes be so tainted by corruption and worldliness within that the true communion of Saints may only be discernible by faith; but still we must love it with a devotion which only God's Spirit can inspire; we must cast our lot with its faithful members, that we may dwell within for ever in peace and safety when it is glorified by the presence of its King, at that *restitution of all things* for which they are now patiently waiting. It is not, you see, a city suddenly and as it were fortuitously built up eighteen centuries ago, it rests on no human foundation, nor does its erection argue any change in the Divine counsels: it was called into existence from the beginning, and we who now belong to it regard as our spiritual countrymen not only the Saints of the Christian Church, but all who, before Christ came, served God according to the measure of light which was granted to them; nay, we doubt not (the

passage before us justifies the belief) that in the list of its citizens will be read at last the names of many apparent aliens, *though Abraham was ignorant of them, and Israel acknowledged them not.* But this city of God has now become identical with the Church of Christ, and includes in its visible aspect all who are united by one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, by the redemption of one Sacrifice, and by obedience to one law. Within the circuit of its walls many dwell who are utter aliens to its spirit, just as without there may be some who ought in truth to belong to it. We must be prepared to find wolves within and sheep without the fold: for it was foreseen that so long as the Church is in exile here, it must contain traitorous and rebellious subjects; in the field of God's husbandry, we are told, both wheat and tares will grow; the draw-net cast into the sea at His command gathers fishes *of every kind, both bad and good.* All must grow together until the harvest, all must remain in the net till *they shall draw to shore and sit down, and gather the good into vessels, but cast the bad away.* Meantime, we who feel our privileges, who prize alike the inestimable blessing of our citizenship, and the urgent responsibilities which it brings upon us, must never cease our diligence to be ourselves *worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called,* and to persuade any of our fellow-citizens whom we see unmindful of their position as the elect of God, or dishonouring it by folly and sin, to remember *whose they are and whom they serve,* and to beware lest by their unfaithfulness in the earthly Jerusalem they are excluded from its heavenly antitype. And when we speak of the citizens of this celestial commonwealth, we must not forget that they include not the living only but the dead. When in the appointed

form of our public worship we pray for the welfare of our spiritual country, the Church of Christ militant here on earth, we not only beseech God to bless and succour those among its members who are still amongst us fighting against sin, but we also thank Him for all belonging to it who have departed this life in His faith and fear. We ask to be strengthened by their examples that with them we may be partakers of his Heavenly kingdom. Some of us, I doubt not, when we use this prayer, recall to memory some among God's saints whose faith has invigorated our own. However this may be, we declare in it our belief that *the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob* is *not the God of the dead, but of the living, for all live unto Him*; we proclaim our communion with all His faithful people whether they are now moving in the midst of us or have entered into their rest with the glorious company of the Apostles, the goodly fellowship of the Prophets, the noble army of Martyrs, with all Christians in every place, wherever the Holy Church throughout the world acknowledges its Lord. The holiest hero whose glorious deeds are recorded in Scripture or history, and the humblest fellow-Christian whom we ourselves have loved and mourned, still share our citizenship in the eternal city. We know that they are still our brethren, because our Father watches over their spirits and ours, and has promised that not a hair of His children's heads shall perish.

Of this celestial commonwealth, already ennobled by so magnificent a history, and hereafter to be elevated to such transcendant dignity, the building which we have just consecrated as the church or house of God in this place, is intended to be to you, who worship in it and

dwell around it, an earthly type and picture. It should remind you constantly of your heavenly calling, it should be to you a beacon-light amidst the waves of this tempestuous world, guiding you to the haven where you will rest in safety from the storm. Whenever you enter it, your hearts should be raised to the Father who watches over you from heaven, to the Lord Jesus Christ who died for you, to the Spirit of Truth and Holiness who is at all times ready to help you. Your thoughts should turn in tender and chastened recollection to those who have gone before you and are safe with Christ for ever, and in kindness and sympathy to those around you who are struggling with their own sins and bearing their own burthens, as you are bearing yours. But more than this: the very aspect of it in the midst of your homes and common places of resort, the thought of its use and purpose, the sight of the Cross upon its summit, which stamps it as especially Christ's, the remembrance of this service by which we have set it apart from all worldly uses and dedicated it altogether to Him, should recall you from selfishness and passion, from presumption and unbelief, from the petty gossip and jealousy which often defile an Indian station, and remind you that *the fruits of the Spirit, love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith,* must spring up in the heart of him who claims a portion in the city of God, and hopes to share the *inheritance of the Saints in light.* Above all, such thoughts should make you desire to be actively useful, liberal, zealous for the good of others, eager to serve and honour the Jerusalem which is above, and to augment the number of its citizens. You have an opportunity of doing this to-day.

You are asked to make a willing and liberal contribution to the funds of the Additional Clergy Society. The objects of this society are closely connected with the thoughts which should be suggested by this day's ceremony, and by this sermon. They are objects which a European congregation in India is especially bound to promote. Scattered up and down the vast extent of this imperial dependency of the British Crown, are a great number of our fellow countrymen and fellow Christians, sometimes gathered in larger, sometimes in smaller communities, sometimes confined to solitary families, nay even reduced to an individual Englishman, who are wholly without the ordinances of religion, to whom the word of God is not preached, nor the Sacraments administered, nor consolation given in sickness, nor advice in trouble, nor hope and encouragement in death. The Additional Clergy Society is the agency through which the Church is labouring to remedy this grievous state of things, and I may add, successfully labouring. Stations are now supplied by it with pastors. The railways especially have developed new centres of life: various forms of agricultural and commercial enterprise have added others. We desire that in all such places and also among scattered Christian families, in the indigo factories of Tirhoot and Bengal, in the tea plantations of Assam and the Dhoon and Kangra, among the salt chokis of Hissar, at the railway stations all over India, men and women may be reminded of faith in Christ crucified, of the gift of the Spirit to comfort them here, of the hope of a resurrection hereafter. We ask your help, brethren, to enable the Society to continue its operations.

SERMON XVIII.

AGRA, 1866.

MINISTERIAL VARIETY IN UNITY.

I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.—1 Cor. ix. 22.

If we were to consider these words in the limited sense in which St. Paul originally wrote them, they would open to us a very interesting enquiry. You remember, no doubt, the context: *Unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.* The great Apostle, in the course of his ceaseless toil and watchfulness for the salvation of souls, felt it right often to renounce his own freedom of action, and to conform to the weaknesses and prejudices of various classes of men—the Jew, the Gentile, the over-scrupulous, all with whom he came into contact—that by such condescension he might bring all to the liberty which is in Christ Jesus. And the question of the limits within which it is safe to do this, how far we may tolerate diversity of sentiment without en-

couraging error, or when we may accept a compromise without violating principle, is, as I have said, one of great interest and importance to those who desire always to do their duty, and yet never to forget the apostolic precept, *let all your things be done with charity.* But although such an enquiry is directly suggested by the text, yet perhaps this view of it is less appropriate to this day's solemnity than an extension of the words to another feature of St. Paul's ministry, which, though closely connected with this, is yet slightly different from it: not his condescension to the infirmities of others, but his habit of adapting himself to their feelings, the wonderful tact and power of conciliation by which he throws himself into the views and prepossessions and previous history of those whom he is from time to time addressing, the large-hearted wisdom with which he disarms opposition, by finding at the introduction to each speech or sermon some common ground between himself and the particular class whom he seeks to win over to the Gospel. A Christian minister, and especially a Christian missionary, can scarcely find any study more practically useful than that of St. Paul's discourses as recorded in the Book of Acts viewed in their relation to the people to whom each is addressed. When he is preaching to the Jews in the synagogue of Antioch in Pisidia, he begins by recounting the glories of Israel, and the special favour with which they had always been regarded by God. When he is shrinking from the worship of the ignorant and half barbarous heathen of Lystra, he appeals to their common acknowledgment of a Being who *made heaven and earth, and the sea and all things that are therein, and had not left Himself without*

witness even to them, *in that He did good, and gave them rain from heaven, and fruitful seasons, filling their hearts with food and gladness.* He seeks to win the attention of the highly cultivated Athenians by connecting their reverence for an *unknown God* with faith in the Lord of heaven and earth, and raising them from idolatry to the spiritual worship of One *who dwelleth not in temples made with hands*, and by assuring them that all men, whether Christians or not, are children of this Father, as indeed a poet of their own had said, *We are also His offspring.* When pleading his cause before the Sanhedrim he conciliates the Pharisee members of the council by declaring that he shares and propagates faith in the resurrection. In addressing an angry crowd of Jews who were crying out, *Away with him,* he suddenly reduces them to silence by appealing to them not in the foreign tongue which had become common at Jerusalem but in their own vernacular. He rouses the dull conscience of the infamous Felix, the most profligate even of Roman governors, by speaking of *righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come*; from the more just and estimable Festus he calmly and respectfully claims his rights as a Roman citizen, while he reminds the enlightened, yet voluptuous and worldly, Agrippa of the declarations of those prophets whose authority as a Jew he could not but respect. Surely there is a great difference between this infinite variety of appeal, this adaptation of the truth to the circumstances, the knowledge, the previous associations, the moral and spiritual condition of his constantly changing auditors, and the dull and almost irrational uniformity with which too many of us modern preachers

are contented to bring before congregations of wholly different culture, education, and position in life, the same unvaried subjects, dwelling perhaps only on some one favourite doctrine, some partial and one sided view of Christianity, instead of *rightly dividing the word of truth*, drawing forth, from the boundless storehouse of Scripture and experience, the medicines needed to remedy the moral sickness prevalent in any particular race or class to whom we have to minister, finding some common ground of belief or interest or habit, rising gradually from conciliation to entreaty, to exhortation, to reproof, *becoming all things to all men, that we may by all means save some.* Here, in India, the variety of classes who all need to be reminded of the terrible consequences of sin, and persuaded to seek for deliverance in Jesus Christ, and to live according to the teaching of His Gospel, is scarcely less than that which St. Paul encountered, though doubtless the same person is not often called upon to exercise the same wonderful faculty of adaptation. One has a congregation of the prosperous, the rich, the educated, of those who are actively engaged in public business, and who need to be warned against the selfishness and worldliness which are so apt to separate them from Christ. Another is set to minister to soldiers, to understand their weaknesses and temptations and peculiarities, to avoid the great error, most unlike St. Paul's world-wide charity, of giving them up because he finds them perhaps rough and shy and prejudiced, and therefore hard to deal with, or, more than this, the slaves of divers lusts and passions. A third, or generally not a third, but one or both of the former, finds among his flock many of a class who especially require delicate

and thoughtful handling, sensitive and often unreasonable, perhaps, yet chiefly so because they have been long and grievously neglected, and therefore needing much forbearance and friendliness, that so they may lay aside prejudices and peculiarities, and learn to appreciate the freedom and order and the humility and manly energy which are to be found in the Gospel. Yet more marked are the differences of those whom the missionary seeks to win to Jesus Christ. I cannot warn you too earnestly, my brethren who are now to be ordained to that high and holy office, that next to the training of your own hearts in the love of your Saviour, and to the study of that written Word of God from which you must draw your message of life and holiness, you have no more pressing duty, if you would follow the example of that Apostle who has furnished the pattern of missionary work, than to make yourselves familiar with the language, the religion, the history, the customs, the modes of thought, the habitual feelings of the various races to whom you are sent to preach the glad tidings of salvation. Not to be too much apart from them, in the scarcely accessible seclusion of mission compounds, but to mix with them in their cities, their bazaars, their villages, by preaching, by itineration, by school-teaching, by rendering help in time of trouble, by encouraging the visits of enquirers, by throwing yourselves among them as a good parish priest in England moves up and down among his parishioners; and again, to read the best books illustrative of their literature, their philosophy, their customs: all such means must be used if you would apply the Gospel of Jesus Christ wisely and skilfully to their peculiar needs. Between the wild and

Arablike Mahometan of our North-west frontier, the bigoted Hindu of Benares, the soldier Sikh of Amritsir, still dwelling proudly on the recent memory of sovereignty, the supple and highly-educated Bengali of Calcutta, and the half-barbarous member of some aboriginal hill tribe, there is as much difference as between the rustics of Lystra, the Jew of Palestine or of Thessalonica, the philosopher of Athens, the luxurious merchant of Corinth, the susperstitious devotee of Diana at Ephesus, and all the other varieties of human nature with which St. Paul was required to deal, and in all of which he laid the broad and deep foundations of Christ's holy Catholic Church. Let your preaching, then, brethren, be wise and discriminate like his; adapt your addresses to the wants, the character, the religious standard of each; do not denounce idolatry to the Mahometans, or labour to prove the possibility of an Incarnation to the Hindus, but plant yourselves at once on that ground to which your different hearers have from time to time attained, knowing that if you cannot find any point of contact between their religious creed and the Christian, you have at least the common starting-point of conscience, and reason, and a recognition of the Infinite and Invisible; in short, that you can everywhere find 'some touch of nature which makes the whole world kin.' From any such ignorance and indifference to the peculiar duties and characteristics of the Christian ministry, those who are now to be admitted to the first grade in it have at least this security, that they are themselves natives of the country, born and educated in India, sprung from Indian ancestors, moving freely among their countrymen, and long engaged in the work

of catechists and in teaching native schools. They, at least, must be familiar with the character, the associations, the prejudices of Indians, with the good and the evil of Indian life, with the foundation of truth which lies at the bottom of every religion, with the gloomy susperstition of error and wickedness which has been raised on that foundation by human perversity. They have no excuse if they do not throw themselves heartily into the great work which is before them, and if they do not know how to give to every man who asks them why they have renounced their ancestral creed, and what is the reason for the new hope that is in them, a good and appropriate answer. They should show towards Hindus the same love and sympathy with which St. Paul regarded the Jews when he exclaimed, *Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge.* They, like him, must feel that those around them who are sitting in darkness are their brethren, their kinsmen according to the flesh; that to them also, though not in the same sense as to Israel, yet as the offspring of God, pertaineth the adoption and the glory and the promises, the right of entering Christ's Holy Catholic Church, and finding in Him the end of all religious aspirations for righteousness to everyone that believeth. Whatever be the amount of good done to India by European missionaries—and you in Agra who see their work are without excuse, if you undervalue the holy and self-sacrificing labours of some who have lived and of some who are living among you—it is in accordance with reason and nature to expect that their ministry must

mainly consist in the work of preparation; their task is chiefly to organise institutions, to mingle a pure and unselfish and Christian element with the vaunted progress of our material and secular civilisation, to win over a few natives of the land who shall spread among their countrymen the knowledge of the truth, or in the words of a quaint old divine, *generare patres*, to beget begetters, to teach those who in their turn shall teach others. We can hardly doubt that to natives of the country God will commit the actual conversion of the country, and therefore I believe that to pray God to raise up such natives, to find out those who are fit for ordination, to prepare them, to ordain them, to pray for them, to help, support, and encourage them, is one chief duty of us English members of the Church in India in our various functions and vocations, of bishop and presbyters, of missionary committees and school teachers, of laymen in every place where any such opportunity offers. And to you, my brethren, now to be ordained, place before yourselves no nearer object than this—the conversion of India to Christ. In furthering this great end, in winning souls to love and serve a living Saviour, you will do more to promote the true progress of your country and its restoration to happiness and greatness than all the Asokas and Vikramadityas and Akbars effected in former days, and than all the constructors of railways and telegraphs, and promoters of secular education, important and profitable as their work unquestionably is, can possibly accomplish in our own.

But the work of the ministry is not all preaching. The instructions of the Sunday, the address in the bazaar, the exposition in the school, must be followed

up by assiduous work with individual hearers, whether already Christians or enquirers into the truth of the Gospel. The pledges which I must presently require of you include the work of seeking for Christ's sheep that are dispersed abroad, and for His children who are in the midst of this naughty world, no less than of preaching the word of God in the congregation; they refer to private as well as to public exhortations and monitions. In the actual form by which the priest's office is conferred, this responsibility is put upon you in a manner which often startles those who hear it for the first time, by applying to you the words in which our Lord, after His resurrection, ordained His apostles, *Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.* To those who may tremble at this extension of the apostolic commission to the presbyters of modern days these few words of explanation may be useful. It may be observed that on every occasion, wherever the framers of our Liturgy found a text of Scripture suitable to their purposes, they were in the habit of incorporating it into our services, and leaving it to the understanding of thoughtful Christians to make the necessary application of it. Now, it is undeniable that the declaration of God's promises and threats, the assurance of His mercy to the penitent, the refusal of it to the hard-hearted, the profligate, the unbelieving, the self-righteous, is a function of the Christian ministry; and the Church, instead of attempting to define what cannot be defined, the exact limits and manner in which this function is to be exercised, has thought it safer to repeat over those ordained to it the words in which Christ commissioned

the first preachers of the Gospel to go forth and convert the world. In these words He conferred on them the power of reading the heart, of knowing when to console a sinner by reminding him of God's love, and when to warn him by setting before him His justice. Doubtless the gifts of the Spirit were conferred on them by a special inspiration, and they were often divinely enlightened to lay bare the hidden counsels of the soul. But if we believe in the abiding presence of Christ's Spirit in the Church, we cannot think that this power in its due measure is refused to His servants in any age. Like all His gifts it is conditional on our prayers. Even the apostles could not always exercise it. Paul and Barnabas differed as to the penitence of Mark: the one desired to retain, the other to forgive his sin. Paul kept Demas by his side, believing that he was no less faithful than Luke, yet afterwards, when the Apostle was overtaken by danger and sorrow, *Demas forsook him, having loved this present world.* My brethren, to whom this solemn charge is presently given, if you are wholly devoted to your ministry, instant in prayer, faithful dispensers of the word of God and of His Holy Sacraments, earnest in declaring His judgments upon sin, and the riches of His mercy in Christ Jesus, you need not fear that His spirit will forsake you; you may be sure that your advice, or warning, or exhortation, or comfort, or condemnation, will be confirmed and ratified in heaven. One who was not disposed to magnify the powers of the Christian priesthood has accepted these words of ordination as full of important meaning, and has paraphrased them thus: 'The Bishop says to the candidate for orders . . . We are confident that He

who has begun a good work in you will confirm it to the end; that as He has given you the will, so, also, He will give you the power to do. May His help and blessing be with you, that by wisdom and goodness you may show yourself a true minister of Christ. Your office is to preach Christ's word. Whosoever listens to your preaching God will justify; and whosoever despiseth it, him will God condemn.' For it will be observed—and this is specially important—from the position which this citation of our Saviour's words occupies in the Form of Ordination, that it refers especially to the faithful dispensing of God's word—that is, applying its threats and consolations, its promises of mercy, and its declarations of judgment to the conscience—and of His holy Sacraments; to the duty of excluding notorious evil livers from the Lord's Supper, or hypocritical enquirers from baptism; or, again, to the duty of conveying the blessing of these ordinances to the penitent and the sincere. And thus, my brethren, there is one part of your work as missionaries in which this duty of forgiving and retaining sin will, as we trust, come into frequent exercise. We hope that you will often be called upon to decide on the fitness of a candidate for admission to Christ's Church by the Sacrament of Baptism. When you are called upon to do this, think of the solemn responsibility which you accepted as you listened to these words of ordination, and pray for the promised grace of God in guiding you to form a right decision and in ratifying it when it is formed. Be so merciful and charitable in dispensing this Sacrament that you be not remiss or hasty; so judge of the heart and motives of the enquirer that you forget not mercy. *Break not the bruised reed, nor quench the*

smoking flax—by demanding too high a standard of Christian knowledge and moral practice, from one who has grown up in the darkness of heathenism; but yet be not led astray by mere outward appearance, so as to bring into the fold a wolf who will scatter and devour the sheep. In this part of your ministry, too, you must *be made all things to all men, that you may by all means save some*; you must pray for the great gift of discerning character, of penetrating the difficulties, the temptations, the motives of individual disciples, as in your public preaching you try to learn those of races and classes of men. In both divisions of your labour make yourselves *servants unto all that you may gain the more, seek not your own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.*

We see, then, brethren, that the work of the ministry is one of almost endless variety; but yet we must not forget that it is pervaded and bound together by a living unity. The same Apostle who has taught us to become all things to all men, and who has shown so wonderful a power of adapting his teaching to different hearers, has yet enjoined on all Christian ministers the task of testifying, *both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ.* So, too, in spite of his diversity of powers and gifts and accomplishments, he has declared that in comparison with the sum and substance of his Divine message all other knowledge is absolutely worthless, for he says, *I determined to know nothing among you, save Jesus Christ and Him crucified.* Nor has he said this once only; again we read: *Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.* Take

heed, brethren, to these precepts, as essential to a faithful ministry. Be not led astray by the divers interests and excitements of your work—a varied literature, a manifold activity, by the secular teaching in your schools, the fresh scenes and healthful changes of your travels, the plans which you may form for organising a mission, for building a church, for multiplying your external means of usefulness—to forget its one end and object, the diffusion of the knowledge and love of Christ Jesus. Be careful first to know and love Him in your own souls, that so you may speak of Him from your own experience to others. When you interpret Scripture, remember to bring Christ out of it. When you attempt to conciliate or instruct the heathen, try to make them feel that Christ is the Light of the world, the true Word and Revelation of God, the only Sacrifice for their sins as well as ours, the Object to whom have pointed all the aspirations and unconscious prophecies embedded in their own idolatries. Do not be content that those to whom you minister should find in your words instruction, information, or pleasing excitement; be careful that above and besides these they find edification, rebuke, warning, and comfort; in a word, that they find Christ.

I have addressed my remarks, on this occasion, mainly to those who either have been, or are now, about to be dedicated to the one special function of preaching His salvation to a fallen world. Yet I trust that in doing so I have suggested some serious thoughts and searchings of heart to the general body of the congregation also. For, brethren, whatever brings before you the solemnity, the dignity, the responsibility of the

Christian ministry ought to heighten your own sense of Christian obligation, the solemnity, dignity, and responsibility of the Christian name. The priesthood and diaconate of the Church of Christ are no caste distinctions, marking off those who exercise them by some barrier of arrogance and exclusiveness from their Christian brethren: *we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.* We are set apart to a particular function in order to remind you unceasingly of your duties, your privileges, your advantages, and the use which you should make of them. Of all those terse and expressive prayers of our English Liturgy—which are called collects because they collect, as it were, and sum up, in a few easily remembered words, some great Christian doctrine, and the petition for some urgent need—there is none which so nearly concerns the laity of the Christian Church, and yet is so often forgotten by them, as the second for Good Friday, in which we offer our supplications and prayers before God 'for all estates of men in His holy Church, that every member of the same, in his vocation and ministry, may truly and godly serve Him.' Not of the clergy exclusively or even chiefly, but of you, my brethren, you the mass of this congregation, to many of whom it probably seems strange to be told that you have a ministry in the Church of Christ, are these words spoken. It is not ordination but baptism which makes us members of Christ, limbs, that is, of that great body whereof He is the head; bound, therefore, to make some exertion for the health and welfare of the whole, to do something, according to our powers and opportunities, for the ser-

vice of Christ and of our brethren; *for as we have many members*, or limbs, *in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.* It is not ordination but baptism in which Christians are consecrated as *kings and priests to God*, in which they are called to be *a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that they should show forth the praises of Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvellous light.* He who is favoured with earthly power and wealth; he who is gifted with ready eloquence and a persuasive tongue; the magistrate, the officer, the soldier in his regiment; the wife and mother in her household; everyone who has a head to think with, a hand to help with, a heart to feel with, is bound in some way or other, according to the extent or variety or importance of his gifts, to regard himself as a minister of Christ, and therefore to take part in that work which He Himself began by coming down upon earth and dying for the salvation of mankind. You also should *be made all things to all men, that you may by all means save some.* You should endeavour to sympathise and co-operate with those who are directly set apart and excused from other duties, that they may devote their whole time and all their energies to carrying on that work.

In whatever part of India your lot may be cast, you can in some way help the chaplain, the missionary, or other clergyman near you in the work to which he has been appointed. You can help him by friendly countenance and support; by contributing to the objects which he is anxious to promote; by serving perhaps on a mis-

sionary committee or other board designed to do good; by ministering, it may be, to the poor, the sick, the helpless, perhaps by teaching a Sunday class; by taking an interest, if it be a military station, in the useful occupations now wisely encouraged to keep soldiers from idleness and vice; in any case by a Christian example, a healthy influence, by a thousand unobtrusive ways of doing good, by removing prejudices, by reconciling animosities and discouraging unkindness, by always judging charitably, by punctuality and reverence in the house of God. Most of all, brethren, you can help the clergy and promote the salvation of men by earnest and frequent and devout prayer. To that duty I now specially call you in behalf of our brethren about to be ordained. Presently they will be especially commended to your united supplications. Claim for them, then, the fulfilment of God's promise that if a few of His people agree as touching anything that they shall ask it shall be done for them by our Father which is in heaven. Agree, then, in interceding humbly and faithfully in behalf of these candidates for the ministry. Think how great will be their work, how many their difficulties, how painful their discouragements, how certain their disappointments. Ask God with real earnestness to help and bless them, with such earnestness as a mother feels for a sick child or a wife for a husband whom she loves as her own soul. If we would but appreciate what infinite blessings to all mankind would be secured by the establishment throughout the world of the kingdom of God, your prayers for those who are to support and propagate that kingdom would be scarcely less importunate than for your nearest and

dearest. And be well assured that, in praying for others, you always obtain a blessing on yourselves. He who taught us to say *Our Father* rather than my Father, has in that lesson assured us that the highest welfare of every individual Christian is essentially bound up with the welfare of all, that *we are the body of Christ and members in particular*, and that in that body there must be no schism, no separation of interests and spiritual needs, but that *the members must have the same care one for another*. And as a proof and earnest of your interest in the spread of Christ's Gospel,—no imperfect measure, be it remembered, of a man's own faith in it and value for it, I invite you now to make a contribution to the cause of Missions, as carried on by our own Church in this country, through the agency of its two great societies. Such an appeal is customary in this diocese, during the present Epiphany season. At that season, we specially commemorate the manifestation of Christ to the Gentiles, and we have a proof to-day that His manifestation to them is still being carried on, gradually and slowly it may be, but still surely, in the fact that here, in a city adorned by the magnificence of Akbar and Shahjehan, we are about to ordain to the Christian ministry two men born in the darkness of heathenism, but called in the course of God's Providence into His marvellous light. Yes, brethren, the work is real enough and great enough to demand your willing and eager help; let us unite in bestowing upon India, among the many gifts which she is receiving from England, the one thing needful, the pearl of great price, the only treasure which will never rust nor be taken away.

SERMON XIX.

GOORGAON, 1866.

THE HOLY COMMUNION.

He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.— 1 Cor. xi. 29.

AMONG the contrasts which may be noticed between the Christianity of the first century and the Christianity of the nineteenth, not the least singular is the difference of the views of the Holy Communion taken by some persons at these two epochs, for it is remarkable that the faults which have marked the conduct of Christians in regard to it now and then are exactly opposite in character. The sin of the early Church, at least as far as its condition in the great and luxurious city of Corinth is a type of its general state, was irreverence arising from over-familiarity. The passage from which the text is taken is one of the highest interest, for it lifts the veil from a most remarkable feature of apostolical times. We see with atonishment that the most sacred, most distinctive, and (if I may so speak) the tenderest and most pathetic of Christian ordinances, in the very lifetime of persons who had seen Jesus Christ

our Lord, was actually desecrated by disorder and intemperance. For those who then gathered for this holy feast, not only made it an opportunity for displaying the arrogance of class and the selfishness of party, *despising the church* or congregation of God, and *shaming them that have not*, that is, the poor who could not contribute to the expenses of the common meal so largely as their wealthier brethren, but, horrible to relate, sometimes even defiled the memorial feast of Christian love by intoxication. Our text occurs in the course of the reproof which St. Paul administers to those guilty of this profanity; and although we are not distinctly told what further measures he adopted to stop it, yet, when we look into the history of the Church a little later, we find the Communion not only administered with a new and special formality but also with less frequency, as if the primitive simplicity which was deemed sufficient for the celebration of the rite in the first freshness of its origin had been found too pure for the deteriorating influence of time; and thus we can hardly doubt that the more careful solemnities which surround it in our own day have, to some extent, resulted from the evils rebuked in the passage before us, and that the change is directly or indirectly due to St. Paul himself.

But a mere alteration in the outward form of administration is not the only consequence of the reaction from these evils. I cannot better describe another and much less desirable result of this reaction than in the words of a recent writer: 'If there be an institution guarded and fenced with peculiar reverence,' he says, 'it is the ordinance of Holy Communion. Even to a fault this has been so. Men, careless in life and un-

believing in opinion—utterly indifferent how they profaned or trifled with aught else in the Christian faith or worship—have yet shrunk, with a superstitious dread, from tampering with the Lord's Supper. To that one sacred memorial they have transferred all the reverence and all the scrupulosity which ought to have been diffused over everything ordained by the word or consecrated by the touch of Christ. If only they abstained from defiling by a worldly or sinful contact that one last bequest of dying love, they thought it but a small thing to desecrate the ordinance of Common Prayer: nay, they thought it but a small thing to break the command through life, or to postpone the command till death, to *do this*, to eat of the bread and drink of the cup, in remembrance of the Cross and Passion. It was no hypocrisy, they thought, to meet in the congregation for worship; no untruth to repeat Creeds which for them meant nothing, or to join in Litanies in which they asked for nothing; no profaneness to exchange smiles or whispers in the sanctuary, to turn sermons into ridicule, or to point their sarcasms and wing their jests with Scripture; provided only they regularly turned their backs upon the Table spread for Communion, and stood aloof from that one single act to which they confined their whole idea of religious profession and ceremonial sanctity.'*

This, then, is the contrast to which I desire to draw your attention: in old times, an irreverent familiarity with this Blessed Sacrament, in modern times, a feeling of indifference to it, half arising from superstition and half from unbelief. Could an apostle be amongst us

* *Life's Work*, &c., p. 80. By C. J. Vaughan, D.D.

again, and survey our worship, I believe that there is nothing which would astonish and grieve him more than the sudden flight of half or more than half the congregation from a church when the Holy Communion is about to be celebrated. If he marked with surprise and pain that it was once made an occasion of revelry and excess, not less marked would be his censure of too many among ourselves who regard it as an ordinance with which they have literally no concern. Of old it was considered, as our Lord undoubtedly intended, the highest, the central, the most peculiar act of Christian worship: it is doubtful whether the Church ever gathered together for such worship without also partaking of the Lord's Supper. In the Book of Acts the two are spoken of as inseparable: the new converts *continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.* In the account which is given of a primitive Sunday at Troas, we are told that *upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them.* To partake regularly of the Holy Communion was quite as necessary a part of the Christian profession as to pray or to search the Scriptures, or to meet for worship in the great congregation. Yet undoubtedly in the text St. Paul does warn his disciples that there is such a thing as partaking of it unworthily; his language seems at first sight more calculcated to deter than to encourage. And this no doubt has been its effect: many persons who do not think much upon the subject, and others who desire an excuse for their habitual disobedience to their Lord's command, say that they are afraid of *eating and drinking unworthily*, and therefore of *eating and drinking their own damnation.* Let us,

then, examine the passage, and see how far this excuse avails them. To understand it, we must open our Bibles, and consider the few verses which precede the text before we come to the text itself.

The Apostle is telling the Corinthians that when they treat the Lord's Supper with irreverence they forget the time and the object of its institution. When they assemble with their petty rivalries and their disregard of the poor, and their reckless self-indulgence, the feast which they celebrate ceases to be the Communion at all. It has no connection with that awful night when the Lord was betrayed, or with the commemoration of His death for sin. For He invested the common elements of bread and wine with a special power and solemnity. *Take, eat,* He said: *this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. This cup is the new testament in my blood;* that is, it is the new covenant ratified in or through my blood: *this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of me.* And hence it follows, that as often as Christians *eat this bread, and drink this cup, they show,* that is, proclaim or publicly exhibit, *the Lord's death till He come.* And thus it is impossible that any one should do this unworthily, that is, irreverently, carelessly, without incurring God's anger. *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh,* not indeed, as our version gives it, *damnation* in its modern sense of everlasting death, but, as the margin reads, *judgment*: he brings upon himself judgments and punishments from God, as *not discerning the Lord's body*; that is, not distinguishing between the bread and wine consecrated to such a sacred purpose and common food. And what the judgments or punishments were is explained in the

verse following the text. *For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.* For thus profaning the Lord's Supper, it had pleased God to send upon the Corinthian Church divers visitations of His displeasure, in sundry forms of sickness and weakness, nay, in some cases of premature death. These judgments had been sent as chastisements, not to effect, but to prevent, their final judgment or damnation, to rouse them when lying on the bed of sickness or death to a sense of sin and the need of repentance and forgiveness, that so, being now judged and *chastened of the Lord, they might not be condemned with the world* at the last great day.

Such then, brethren, is the true sense of this famous passage, which, no doubt, is frequently misunderstood; but, I fear, more often from a deliberate desire to catch at any apology for a habit of unchristian negligence, than from any real obscurity in its language. There is, you see, not a word in it which ought to prevent any one from accepting the invitation to the Holy Communion, nay, in its literal sense it does not apply to us of the present day at all, because the rules of the Church as to the mode of administration prevent us from not *discerning the Lord's body*, i.e. from outwardly treating the sacramental elements as ordinary bread and wine. But undoubtedly we may in spirit be guilty of the sin which the Apostle here condemns; so that our Church is quite justified in quoting his words as a warning to communicants, and telling us that 'the danger is great if we receive this Holy Sacrament unworthily, for then we eat and drink our own damnation;' that is, we incur the risk of Divine judgments on ourselves; or, as it

is explained directly afterwards, 'kindle God's wrath against us.' But the risk of unworthy receiving plainly does not imply, as often interpreted, that persons are not good enough, to use a common phrase, to go to the Communion. It is a warning rather to those who are willing than to those who are reluctant to come. To *eat and drink unworthily* is to eat and drink carelessly, lightly, without prayer, without sense of sin, without any desire of forgiveness, without any expectation of a blessing to be received, or any faith in Christ's death as the foundation on which to rest our hope of life eternal, perhaps without any serious thought about eternal life at all. Doubtless if any one comes to the Communion in this state of mind, he will be very likely to *eat and drink unworthily*: but then, brethren, is this state of mind a right one? are you contented to remain in it? are you contented to die in it? can you look forwark to the judgment day and not desire to be delivered from it? Such a state of mind may, no doubt, keep you from the Communion, but only in the same way as it should keep you (if you were consistent) from Christian worship of any kind, either private or public. There is nothing special about the Lord's Supper in the sense that it is intended for earnest and devoted Christians, while the rest of the service and private prayer is intended for ordinary Christians, who lay no particular claim to serious thought and careful practice: the Apostles never contemplated such an irrational distinction as this. Either you are trying to follow the Lord Jesus and to obey Him and to resemble Him, or *you judge yourselves*, like the Jews of Antioch in Pisidia, *unworthy of everlasting life*. In the former case the

Holy Communion is, of course, open to you, you are invited, nay, you are pressed to come: it ought to be a part of your regular Christian worship, the highest outward expression of your faith and hope and love, the constant source of improvement and sanctification. In the other case, your whole position is an absurdity, the Creed which you repeat, the prayers which you offer, are alike unmeaning; *your hearts*, believe me, *are not right in the sight of God*; not only not right in the sense in which we must all feel only too frequent signs of their deceitfulness and desperate wickedness, but not even turned in the right direction, not *looking unto Jesus as the Author and Finisher of our faith*, not recognising the fact that *there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must* be saved. If you look at the order of the English Communion Service as it is intended to be used, though this order is now unfortunately very often neglected, you will see that it is continuous from beginning to end. It does not consist of two parts, one ending with the sermon, and the other wholly separate from it, with an entirely fresh commencement. It is not intended for about half, or, as is the practice in some Indian stations, I grieve to say, for one-twentieth part of the congregation; but the Service is wholly uninterrupted, except apparently by a short pause at the end of the prayer for the Church militant here on earth—to give opportunity doubtless for the departure of those who are too young to communicate, or otherwise prevented from doing so, and for the convenient arrangement of the mass of the congregation for receiving the Holy Sacrament. Our present proceedings, as they would have amazed and grieved the inspired founders of the

Church Catholic, so they were never contemplated by the Reformers of our own branch of it.

And now, brethren, let us turn to the other side of the question, and as I have endeavoured to refute the arguments for not coming, let me earnestly press upon you the reasons for coming. I must indeed do so very briefly and inadequately; and they might well furnish matter for a separate sermon, but there are advantages in trying to bring before you the whole subject at once.

I. First, then, many of us are, I suppose, liable more or less to the temptations of unbelief, to the feeling which prompted the Jews to *seek after a sign*, to the intrusion into our minds of doubts as to the reality of Revelation and of the question, 'Is it indeed true that the Son of God came down from heaven for us men and for our salvation?' Now the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper is a direct historical connection between us and the Man Christ Jesus. Whenever a Christian congregation meets at the Lord's table,* 'they are grasping a chain, of which the first link is held by the hand of Jesus Himself in that upper chamber of Jerusalem, where He gathered His disciples together for their parting meal. We hear Him say once more, *This is my body, which is given for you: this is my blood of the new testament.*' Brethren, in days of trouble and unbelief, nay, in any days in which we have to bear the heavy burthen of sin, is it nothing to have the reality of Christ's life and passion and death thus vividly and historically brought before us? Is it no aid to our faith thus to see Him, as it were, *evidently set forth, crucified among us?* Doubtless this was partly the meaning of our Lord's words, the simplest in which

* *Christian Evidence and the Bible*, p. 50. By the Rev. D. J. Vaughan.

the teaching of this Sacrament is conveyed to us, *This do in remembrance of me.* Partly, I say, but not altogether; for the remembrance of Jesus should revive not our faith only, but our love and obedience. Surely, brethren, we can be in no circumstances in which the remembrance of our Lord will not do us good. If we are in prosperity, and require to be reminded of the uncertainty of this world's advantages; if we are in sorrow, and need the revival of our hope of heaven; if we are oppressed with the sense of sin, and desire a more distinct assurance of God's forgiveness; if we are flagging and failing in the duties of life, and want fresh vigour added to our languishing zeal; the remembrance of Christ, of His life, His death, and resurrection, His example, His atonement, His present power and prevailing intercession, is in every case the one thought which is calculated to supply our particular need. And this is the thought which in this Holy Sacrament is brought home by God's Spirit to our hearts.

II. But this is not all. Christ does not only say, *This do in remembrance of me:* He says also, as we have heard, *This is my body: this is my blood.* We do not presume to penetrate the full depth of these most solemn declarations. It were easy, indeed, to show that they do not countenance the strange inference that the bread and wine which we see with our eyes and taste with our mouths are changed into different substances, for our Lord has also said that *the flesh profiteth nothing,* and that the words which He speaks to us *are spirit and life.* The best commentary upon them is to be found in the remonstrances which St. Paul addresses to the Corinthians: *the cup of blessing which we bless, is it not*

the communion of the blood of Christ? the bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? So that the words *this is my body, this is my blood,* or (as they are also reported), *this cup is the new testament, or covenant, in my blood,* are explained by the Apostle to mean, this bread is the communion, the participation, the means of feeding spiritually on my body; this cup is the communion or spiritual imparting of my blood, the means of preserving you in that covenant which is established in my blood. Or, to turn to another passage of Scripture, this bread and wine are the means, specially appointed and revealed by God Himself, of eating Christ's flesh and drinking His blood; that is, if we may venture to attempt any accommodation to our understandings of language which rises far above them, of uniting ourselves with His life and death, with His incarnation and His atonement, with His whole work for our salvation, once carried on in the flesh on earth, and now in the Spirit in heaven; of that process, in short, which, as He has told us, is the necessary sustenance of every Christian, and the entrance to eternal life. I do not assert that the Holy Communion is the only means of our thus feeding on the bread of life, there are doubtless other channels of grace revealed to us in Scripture: I merely say that it is a special and distinctive means, instituted by the Lord when He was about to leave us, as the common privilege and source of blessing to His people, and that therefore most undoubtedly it cannot be neglected without great sin, and grievous hindrance to our growth in holiness.

I can only stop to remind you further, in the most cursory way, that as the Lord's Supper is a communion

with Christ, so it is also a communion one with another, for so also the Apostle teaches us, that when we gather round the Lord's table, we are *one bread, and one body, for we are all partakers of that one bread.* For there we may look for the presence of the Holy Ghost, the God of peace, to drive away from among us all jealousies, rivalries, and quarrels, to teach us that as we have *one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all,* so we should *walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love.*

And now, brethren, I commend these thoughts very earnestly to you all. Doubtless I do not wish any to come ignorantly or doubtfully, or to look for a blessing from the mere material reception of the Sacrament, apart from the state of mind in which they approach it. But if any one does feel doubtful or ignorant about it, he has an appointed minister whom he can consult in all such perplexities. And if the Lord Jesus Christ did command us to observe a particular ordinance, as we know that He did, and attached special blessings to a faithful participation in it, as we have heard from His own words and the words of His greatest Apostle, it is for you, my friends, to consider how far the faults which often trouble and perplex you—your weakness to resist temptation, your want of faith, your difficulty in realising the Gospel and doing your duty, your discomfort in looking forward to death and judgment—may arise from your habitual indifference to a great Christian privilege, and your continued neglect of a means of grace and blessing which God has designed for your improvement and sanctification.

SERMON XX.

CALCUTTA CATHEDRAL, 1866.

PASSION WEEK: PALM SUNDAY.

Behold, the kingdom of God is within you.—Luke xvii. 21.

In beginning our annual commemoration of the most solemn week which has ever passed upon the rolls of time since the world was called into being, I am desirous to call your particular attention to the personal, individualising, heart-searching character of its occurrences and its lessons. At a season when we are especially contemplating the great act of universal Redemption, the Sacrifice which was offered for the sins of the whole world, and so might be disposed to dwell chiefly on the general aspect and character of religion, on the mercy of God in reconciling the world to Himself, and on the blessings which He has bestowed on the children of men by gathering them into one great Catholic Church, we are at the same time continually reminded of His loving care for each individual soul, and the distinct responsibility of each to Him. We are reminded of this especially as we follow the sorrows of our great Example, the perfect Man, whose relation to His Father in the days of His flesh is the pattern of

that in which each of us is designed to stand to God. See how constantly He comes to Him, not in the way of vague and general dependence, not as the representative of humanity, or as the Head of the infant Church, though, doubtless, His work in these offices is most important; but as a distinct individual sufferer, a Son personally learning obedience, loving and being loved, seeking help and obtaining it. Remember the intensely individual character of the Agony in the Garden, the prayer for help, for the removal of the cross, for power to fulfil the Divine will; remember, too, the mission of the angel to impart that comfort which the sleeping disciples were too weary to give; remember, above all, Christ's appropriation of God's love to Himself in the cry on the cross: *My God, My God*—not merely, O God, or our God—*why hast Thou forsaken me?* And if we pass from the consideration of God's relation to Christ, to the thought of Christ's relation to His disciples, which, though then only existing on earth, is yet the type and earnest of the connection which He still maintains with us from heaven, we see again that it is special and discriminating no less than general and impartial. Individual Apostles address to Him remarks natural to their several characters, and receive answers suitable to their several needs. The chief instance is furnished by the conduct and treatment of St. Peter. Our Lord showed not only that He included him in the love which He bore to all the eleven, but that He knew him to require an extraordinary exercise of the Divine protection when He spoke the warning words, *Satan hath desired to have you*—you, that is, all the Apostles—*that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee*—

thee, Peter, the one whose danger is most imminent, and who has the chief need of my prayer—*that thy faith fail not.* Nor can we imagine anything more searching and more personal than that piercing look with which, when the self-confident Apostle actually had fallen, the Lord suddenly called back the memory of His fruitless cautions, and so drew from him bitter tears of penitence and shame. The Gospel which, in various forms, we are to read this week is a proclamation of God's love not only for the Church which *He purchased with His own blood*, but for every separate soul which has been gathered into it.

But in bringing thus prominently forward the thought of each man's personal relation to God, the concluding chapters of the life of Christ only repeat and continue a doctrine which pervades the whole of Christianity, or rather, the whole of God's revelation to man, both Christian and Jewish. It may be said, indeed, to be the special characteristic of the true Revelation. It formed no feature in the creed of Paganism. The Greek and Roman view of religion was that it is a compact with a nation or a race, not with an individual. The idea was that of a national covenant, of subjection to a national order, obedience to a national law, citizenship in a commonwealth, which the Deity was pleased to favour. Such language as *This God is our God*, even the opening invocation of the Lord's Prayer, would have been intelligible to an ancient heathen, but he would not have gone on to say with David: *The Lord is my Shepherd, therefore shall I lack nothing. He shall feed me in a green pasture, and lead me forth beside the waters of comfort;* he would not have understood St. Paul's

continual declarations: *I thank my God through Jesus Christ: the Lord stood by me and strengthened me: my God shall supply all your need.* He would have recognised in public worship a necessary element in the prosperity of his country, he would not have comprehended the position of an individual Christian as an *heir of God, and joint heir with Christ,* called *to suffer with Him, that he might be also glorified together.* It was the aim of Christianity to bring every believer face to face with his Master and his Judge, to convince him of his individual responsibility, of his personal sin, and of the distinct love with which God in Christ regards him, just as a father watches with discriminating affection over every separate child. These, I say, are Christian ideas, and only Christian, practically unknown to Paganism, receiving their consummation and perfection in the Gospel, though doubtless pervading, with more or less distinctness, God's preparatory dealings with man. Thus, the founder of the Jewish nation was summoned by the Divine voice to place himself in a direct communion with God, which should supersede all earthly ties: *Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, into a land that I will show thee, and I will make of thee a great nation.* The call of Abraham was a call to him to spend his life in an immediate and conscious dependence upon God; his faith, which is the chosen type and pattern of Christian faith, was an implicit trust in an invisible Guide, and a readiness always to receive and obey His monitions. The title, *God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob,* by which the Jews loved to speak of their heavenly Lord and King, implies a mysterious but direct communion

between that Sovereign Will which guides the universe and the minds and hearts of individual men. The whole principle of morality in its peculiar Scriptural form, whether taught in the rudimentary lessons of the Pentateuch, or in the more spiritual declarations of the Prophets, or in the Divine perfection of the Evangelists, is grounded on this close connection between the Creator and the creature, reminding man constantly that his union with God must be realised by doing His works, by following His example, by aiming at the measure of the stature of the fulness of the heavenly Pattern. And thus the feeling of devotion which binds a Christian to his religion does not so much resemble patriotism as loyalty; it is not modelled after the affection with which a citizen regards his country, but after the devotion of a soldier to his general, of a disciple to his teacher, of a subject to the person of his sovereign. The expectation of our promised rest in heaven, of the *city which hath foundations*, of the *house not made with hands*, is always essentially mixed up with the actual vision of Him who admits us into it. To *depart and be with Christ*, to *have our conversation in heaven*, because from heaven we *look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ*, to *meet the Lord in the air*, to *see Him as He is*, to *be like Him*, to dwell in a city *whose temple is the Lord God Almighty, and whose light is the Lamb*, such is the language by which the joys of the life to come are set before us, and by which we are encouraged *to work while it is day*. Instead of visions of an Arcadian paradise, or of a bright island where the world's life is to be lived over again, freed from its cares and anxieties and partings, we are taught to look for a heaven which,

so to speak, is not local, but personal; not a place, but a state of mind, consisting in the complete fruition of pure and unselfish love to Him who has been in this life the Supreme Object of our devotion.

And this special doctrine of the individual connection of every believer with Christ should pervade the whole of our Christian life. It is first impressed upon us in baptism, in which each new member of the spiritual kingdom is devoted by a separate act to be a faithful soldier and servant of Christ. In his Confirmation he himself accepts this allegiance by a personal act of faith and submission, and claims in return his Lord's promise of grace and spiritual protection. The same individual separate pledge is renewed in the Lord's Supper: that Sacrament is at once a communion of love and brotherhood between all Christ's servants, and also a communion of each separate soul with Christ, a means of seeking through the flesh and blood, which were given for each, that preservation of body and soul to life everlasting. Especially is this doctrine manifest in the privilege of private prayer, the right vouchsafed to each of us of entering into God's presence, not grudgingly, or on hard conditions, or at stated times and places only, but always, and everywhere, in the fresh spirit of childlike truthfulness. To live to God consciously and avowedly, to make Him the object of our faith and hope and love, to see in His service the business of our lives, these are the consequences which should follow, and as a matter of fact constantly have followed, from the true Christian sense of an individual connection with Him.

And with this portion of Christian teaching two other doctrines are essentially connected. The first is the

spiritual equality of all men in the sight of God. For there can be no difference, no scale of degrees, in this personal relation to Him except such as results from our own folly, and our own unwillingness to accept His offered blessing. To believe the contrary would be to make God a *respecter of persons*. I need not say that by the Pagans of Greece and Rome, and by the Brahmins of this country, this equality has always been repudiated, and the natural Paganism and Brahminism of our hearts often rise up against it, persuading us to say within ourselves as we contemplate the member of an inferior race or class, or some outcast who has never known our opportunities and advantages, *God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are.* But if we truly feel the deep meaning of such truths as Christianity places in the very exordium of its life-giving message, the truths of a common sinfulness and common redemption, if we remember how entirely it is due to God's mercy that the best of us is suffered to approach Him, and how all-powerful is the efficacy of His grace to regenerate and quicken the most hardened or polluted heart, then certainly we shall feel that the untutored child, the frivolous votary of fashion, the barbarian of our Indian mountains, the most abject child of Adam, are all embraced in the universal invitation of the Gospel, *God willeth all men to be saved, and to come to a knowledge of the truth,* and are only excluded by their own will from the one communion and fellowship which is the mystical body of Jesus Christ our Lord. And thus we solve the apparent paradox, that the only religion which is thoroughly personal and which brings every individual believer face to face with God, is also the only one which is truly catholic; for from our belief in His

fatherly care for each follows the recognition of the brotherhood of all. No one of us can aspire to any greater honour or happiness than to be received as a child into the common Father's house. The grave elder brother who has spent his life at home is not dearer to His heart than the prodigal who has been feeding swine in a strange country. *One is our Master, even Christ, and all we are brethren.*

The other doctrine which immediately follows from this separate connection of every soul with Christ is that of personal immortality. For the sense of relation to God cannot be fully satisfied in this world. We feel that here we cannot enter into the full glory which has been revealed to us, that even the mediation and atonement of Christ have not so securely bridged over the gulf which separates sinful man from the All-Holy God that we can now step across it with eyes undimmed and limbs unshaken and stand in the Divine Presence. The world still distracts us from the Supreme Object of a Christian's life. We tremble as we look down on the precipice on either side of us; the head swims as we walk, from the influence of human passion: we can only gaze afar off and long to enter in. We feel that our communion with God is still miserably incomplete, and so the aspiration after immortality naturally follows from this sense of imperfection. Christ has told us that He came to restore us to the image of God, but our own heart and experience teach that this restoration must be accomplished in the many mansions of our Father's house. But this leads our thoughts to the glory of a consummation which the services of this season only obscurely suggest to us: we are carried beyond the days of agony

and death to the morning of the Resurrection, from the sorrows of Passion Week to the triumph of Easter. It will be better to reserve the subject for another occasion, if God is pleased to grant it, and to direct our thoughts now not to the vision of God face to face, which is promised to the true Christian hereafter, but to the relation in which we stand to Him, the duties which we owe Him, the responsibilities which we incur towards Him, the helps which we receive from Him here.

My brethren, in order that we may do this let me urge you to take advantage of the present season, of the special services to be held in this Cathedral, and of the care with which our Church, following a custom which can be traced to the days of primitive Christianity, has fenced it off from common weeks. The minds and hearts of every faithful disciple may so be turned to the thought of God and Christ and of his own soul; of God as the loving Father, yet strict and unerring Judge; of Christ as the good Shepherd, who has sacrificed His life in the task of fetching back to the Divine fold the wandering sheep; of his own soul, as the immortal, indestructible principle within him, which is designed for fellowship with divinity, yet is often degraded by sin below the level of humanity, and which can only be purified and sanctified and saved by a blessing from heaven on its own aspirations and efforts. All that is around us here, *the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life,* tend to check those efforts, and to deaden those aspirations, so that we can ill afford to dispense with the helps which are sometimes given us to rise above our ordinary life, and to realise our true condition as the redeemed children of God. Such a help I am sure

may be found by each of us in the suspension for one week of ordinary gaiety and entertainments, in attendance at the services of this house of prayer, in the endeavour to raise the heart to the level of those services, and to fix it with something of earnestness and devotion on that thought which was never absent from the mind of St. Paul, and which combines, perhaps above all the other faithful sayings of Scripture, the universality and individuality of Christian Redemption, *Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.* For indeed to unite a consciousness of personal unworthiness with the grateful adoration of God's infinite mercy in Christ, is the lesson which ought to be learnt, as from the whole Gospel, so now especially from this sacred season, when, as an old writer says,* 'the ancient tyranny of the devil was dissolved, death was extinct, the strong man was bound, his goods were spoiled, sin was abolished, the curse was destroyed, paradise was opened, heaven became accessible, men and angels were joined together, the middle wall of partition was broken down, the barriers were taken out of the way, and the God of peace made peace between things in heaven and things in earth.' Doubtless, unless there is a willing and a grateful mind, and a personal interest in a personal redemption, the services of Passion Week, as of Sunday or of any other sacred season, may degenerate into mere formalities or seem cold or unimpressive; but those who are desirous to realise that communion with God which is the privilege of every Christian, and the one sure source of holiness, will turn with thankfulness to this opportunity of drawing nearer in will and affections to Christ, and of realising more deeply His mercy to their souls.

* Chrysostom.

SERMON XXI.

CALCUTTA CATHEDRAL, 1866.

FORESHADOWS OF THE RESURRECTION IN CHRIST.

According to His own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began, but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel.—2 Tim. i. 9, 10.

'HAD Jesus Christ delivered no other declaration than the following, *The hour is coming, in the which all that are in the grave shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation,* He had pronounced a message of inestimable importance, and well worthy of that splendid apparatus of prophecy and miracles with which His mission was introduced and attested; a message in which the wisest of mankind would rejoice to find an answer to their doubts, and rest to their enquiries. It is idle to say that a future state had been discovered already: it had been discovered as the Copernican system was; it was one guess among many. He alone discovers who proves, and no man can prove

this point but the Teacher who testifies by miracles that His doctrine comes from God.'

Some of you may have recognised in the words just read the famous conclusion of one of the chapters in Paley's 'Moral Philosophy,' which has been pronounced to be the finest prose passage in English literature, but of which the truth is less clear than the eloquence. Its teaching has been strongly opposed by many thoughtful writers, who assert that, as it was not the specific object of the Christian religion to satisfy the understanding that there is a future state, so neither is the belief in that state its exclusive attribute. For instance, it is maintained by Jeremy Taylor, a divine of wider range and deeper insight than Paley, that 'God did not only by revelation and the sermons of the prophets to His Church, but even to all mankind, competently teach and effectively persuade that the soul of man does not die; that though things were ill here, yet to the good, who usually feel most of the evils of this life, they should end in honour and advantage.' In proof of such a position, appeal is made to the aspirations, the fervent desires, the longings after immortality, which are found among almost all nations, and these are regarded as instinctive and practical anticipations, which the Creator has implanted in men, preassurances common to the whole human family, which could not prove delusive without an impeachment of their Author's goodness. More especially it is urged that the Jews, with the exception of the comparatively small sect of the Sadducees, who, like doubters and unbelievers in our own day, were found chiefly among the wealthier classes, unquestionably did believe in man's personal immor-

tality, when our Lord came among them; and that Christ Himself fully acknowledges this, not preaching the resurrection as a new doctrine which He was commissioned to reveal, but taking it as a starting-point common to Himself and His hearers. For He said, that if Moses and the prophets did not convince a sinner of a future life, neither would he be persuaded though one were to rise from the dead and describe to him the actual place of torment. And when certain sceptics pressed Him with difficulties which the belief in immortality appears to involve, He referred them in proof of this great verity to the simple words, *I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob;* for this assertion of the connection between God and the patriachs as not a transient but a continual relation, proved that it was not limited by man's fleeting existence upon earth. The eternal Fountain of life and holiness could not, He would seem to argue, enter into a communion with His creatures which He Himself designed to end, nor suffer those wholly to die who live to Him, in Him, and by Him, and whose God He was not ashamed to be called. And thus it is distinctly laid down in one of the Articles of our Church, that 'the old fathers did not look only to transitory promises.' On the other hand, the defenders of Paley's position cite the fact that the rewards and punishments announced in the Pentateuch are such as concern this life only; that even by Solomon wisdom is said to bring *length of days in her right hand, and in her left hand riches and honour;* that Ezekiel describes *the four sore judgments* of God to be *the sword, and the famine, and the noisome beast, and the pestilence.* And the passage of St. Paul, which I have

chosen as my text, is regarded by some as conclusive on the subject, for it appears, or at least is interpreted to mean, that *life and immortality*, unknown before, were *brought to light*, or revealed to mankind, *by Jesus Christ through the Gospel.*

It may be profitable on this greatest day of the Christian year, this birthday of our religion, when our thoughts ought to be turned with something of real interest and devotion to the greatest question of present duty and future hope, to trace the gradual unveiling of the doctrine of man's immortality, to ascertain what was known to the Church of God under the old dispensation, and how it is that, if anything at all was known, the Apostle can say that through the Gospel life and immortality were brought to light. We will not discuss the nature of these aspirations after another life which were felt by the heathen, or the different convictions expressed in different religions by different forms of doctrine, that when a man's body dies and sees corruption his spirit still survives. We only mention the existence of such aspirations and convictions as an undoubted fact, bearing thus far on our subject, that if they were shared by all the chief nations of antiquity and are still found in some grotesque and degraded shape among the most barbarous tribes, it is hardly possible that they should have been unknown to the Jews, even though it may have pleased God, for the hardness of their hearts, to bring temporal motives of action into greater prominence in the law by which they were governed. But the doctrine of man's immortality is almost involved in the history of his creation, for if he was made *in the image of God*, he must have in himself

created gifts, corresponding to God's perfect attributes; and the almost inextinguishable belief in his own continued existence after death, of which we have been speaking, seems a reflection of the immortality of God. And although this is not an absolute proof that this doctrine was revealed from the beginning, since it may be said that the possession of reason, intelligence, imagination, and the capacity for goodness, are sufficient to satisfy the declaration that *God created man in His own image*, yet we must at least admit that it is an argument disposing us to expect a more distinct revelation of our immortality. Moreover, we shall find it strongly confirmed by the language applied to death in the earliest books of Scripture. Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, are all said to be *gathered unto their people*, or to go to their fathers; language which cannot be explained by the mere reunion of the bodies in a common burial-place, for neither Abraham nor Ishmael was buried with his fathers; and Jacob expressly distinguishes it from burial: *I am gathered unto my people: bury me with my fathers.* We are led by such an expression to the thought of an assembly of those who have passed out of our sight, but among whom, after death, each separate soul will be received. And so David expected a personal reunion with his dead child: *I shall go to him, but he shall not come back to me.*

The same belief, that death cannot be the end of our being, is implied in the language by which it is described as involving the direct connection of each separate soul with God. We have seen that this is implied in the title, *God of Abraham, God of Isaac, God of Jacob: for God is not the God of the dead but of the living.* We may add,

that it is also implied in the language used to mark the removal from earth of Enoch and Elijah, *God took him*; for whatever there is mysterious and inexplicable in the accounts of their removal from earth, we are at least told that there is a presence of God into which those who serve Him here may hereafter be admitted. But this comparatively obscure intimation of language is brought into distinct light by the declarations of the Psalms, rare, no doubt, yet, as far as they go, distinct and emphatic. Thus we read in the forty-ninth, *God will redeem my soul from the power of the grave, for He shall receive me:* in the seventeenth, *men of the world, which have their portion in this life, whose bellies God fills with His treasure, who are satisfied with sons, and leave their substance to their children,* are contrasted with one who expects *to behold God's face in righteousness, and to be satisfied when he awakes with His likeness.* We are all familiar with the language of the sixteenth, *Therefore my heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth: my flesh also shall rest in hope. For Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt Thou suffer Thy holy one to see corruption. Thou wilt show me the path of life: in Thy presence is fulness of joy; at Thy right hand are pleasures for evermore.* For although this famous passage, as St. Peter tells us, has its perfect fulfilment only in the resurrection of our Lord, yet in it David speaks of a hope which animated himself, and which he himself was partially to realise. Nor is a less confident assurance expressed in the seventy-third: *I am continually with Thee: Thou hast holden me by my right hand. Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside*

Thee. My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever. Passing from the Psalms to the Book of Job, we come to the famous words which, spoken originally, if modern research may be trusted, by an Edomite of the time of Solomon, have for so many centuries comforted the spirit of the Christian mourner, *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.* Whatever be the exact sense which we assign to the following clause, whether, according to the text to which we are accustomed, we understand Job to say, *in my flesh*, or, as the margin of our Bible reads, *without my flesh* (that is, of course, delivered from this present body, now so sorely afflicted), *I shall see God*, no incidental ambiguity can efface from the passage the same hope of immortality and of the beatific vision. *I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that at last He shall arise upon the earth: and though after my skin, this body is destroyed, yet without my flesh* (lit. from my flesh) *I shall see God: whom I shall behold for myself, and my eyes shall see Himself, and not another: my reins are consumed within me* through longing for that day. In the writings of the prophets these anticipations of a future life become more precise and definite. St. Paul himself can find no worthier conclusion to the great chapter wherein he at once proves by close argument, and celebrates by triumphant poetry, the certainty of the Christian's resurrection, than a combination of the hope of Isaiah, *He will swallow up death in victory*, with the promise given by God through Hosea, *I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction.* When Ezekiel desires

to assure the fallen Israelites of their spiritual resurrection, he draws his imagery from the resurrection of the dead. And from the mouth of Daniel we have the unmistakable assurance: *Many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt. And they that be wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament; and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.*

In recalling to our minds the passages just cited, we see in them clear signs of a progressive revelation, of a life which, like *the path of the just, is as a shining light, shining more and more unto the perfect day.* The doctrine of immortality apparently hinted at in the very record of man's creation, implied in the earliest language on the subject of death, yet not put forward as a motive to the Jews, of whom the holiest are merely taught to seek their reward in God Himself, while the multitude are retained in their obedience by the hope of temporal prosperity, begins to assert itself in the time of David. Through the times of kings and prophets, captivity and restoration, it grows clearer and clearer, till, when our Lord came, it was received as an undoubted article of faith; those who denied it were counted for a sect; and His Apostle was able to divert from himself for a while the storm of unpopularity which raged around the infant Church, by exclaiming before the chief priests and council, that *of the hope and resurrection of the dead he was called in question.* Now this view of the case being, as it seems to me, undeniably true, what is the meaning of the assertion in our text, that *Jesus Christ brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel?* How could

the Apostle say this if immortality and life eternal were already known to the Jews? I believe that the Apostle tells us that not the knowledge of the blessing, but the inestimable blessing itself, is *the grace and truth that came by Jesus Christ.* That there is a life to come was known already, but the destiny which each individual soul may hope for itself therein, and on what grounds it may hope, was unknown. By telling each man this, by showing him, as it were, the path to eternal life, not merely by declaring, but by opening, the kingdom of heaven to all believers, Christ in His resurrection *abolished death. Many of them that sleep,* says Daniel, *shall awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt.* And our Lord's words, *those that are in the graves shall come forth, they that have done well unto the resurrection of life, and they that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation,* are little more than an authoritative republication of that announcement, not, as Paley represents them, a new revelation. Patriarchs, psalmists, and prophets, had looked forward, with more or less distinctness, to the life of the world to come: Christ came, and threw back the gates of that world, and Himself entered in, and invited every child of Adam to trust to His guidance and to follow in His footsteps, and to walk without fear through that valley of the shadow of death, once shrouded in gloom and uncertainty, but now illuminated by the beams of the Sun of Righteousness. Thus He *abolished death* for all who have faith in Him, and will accept Him as their Saviour, and take His word for their law. He *brought life and immortality to light* not only as a fact and a doctrine, but as a real gift and attainable blessing. He offers life

eternal to every one who comes unto God by Him, laying hold of His cross as the means of reconciliation with the Father, whom our sins have alienated, dying with Him to sin, rising with Him to righteousness, and believing that in all times of difficulty, temptation, and trial, *He ever liveth to make intercession for us.*

In this way, surely, the whole text is brought into clearer light than in the other: *God's own purpose and grace were given us in Christ Jesus before the world began;* intimations of it, and preparations for it, were constantly fitting mankind for the full manifestation of it in the Saviour's actual appearing. And thus 'the splendid apparatus of prophecy and miracles,' of which this day's wonder of wonders was the great seal and consummation, furnishes, indeed, a true and appropriate evidence of Christ's divine mission, and of the truth of every word which He spoke who was Himself *the Word*, but at the same time serves a higher purpose than the bare revelation of a future judgment; for it shows not only that there is a resurrection and a life, but that Christ is the resurrection and the life; it brings salvation within the reach of every individual soul; it assures us that death and sin have been conquered, and that it only remains for each of us to claim his own share in the victory. But, brethren, if this be so, it is not well that Easter after Easter should pass unheeded by us, each bringing us nearer, remember, to that final Easter when *the sea will give up the dead that are in it, and death and the grave will deliver up the dead which are in them, and we must be judged, every man according to his works.* Let us listen to Christ's voice now when He tells us to arise from sin, that we may hear it without fear when He

awakens us to judgment. Let us try, in His strength, to rise above the clouds and mists of the world that now is; its passions and disappointments, its ambition and selfishness, its rivalries and feverish anxieties, and ascend into that serene atmosphere of holiness which is the fit preparation and foretaste of the world which is to come.

And finally, if we ourselves possess this precious treasure, this knowledge of the future, this restoration to the image of the Eternal God, this assured hope of immortality, we must be anxious that others should share with us so infinite a boon. It has for years been the custom of this cathedral to devote its Easter offertory to the purposes of the Church Missionary Society, and, in the work of that society we are now bound to take a closer interest than ever, since it administers a college in this city, supported mainly by our endowments, and forming a part, it may be said, of our foundation. That college, and indeed every college and school, and mission and preaching chapel belonging to that society, aims at spreading far and near the knowledge of the *life and immortality which Jesus Christ brought to light through the Gospel.* You should not, brethren, grudge of your substance to so great and blessed an object, you should give liberally, not the mere ordinary subscription which perhaps you have brought with you and intend as a matter of decency to drop into the plate, but a hearty offering to the Saviour who has already *called you out of darkness*, and desires that through the agency of those whom He has called, the knowledge of His salvation should fill the earth, *as the waters cover the sea.*

SERMON XXII.

FORT WILLIAM, CALCUTTA, 1866.

THE DEVOUT SOLDIER.

There was a certain man in Cesarea called Cornelius, a centurion of the band called the Italian band, a devout man, and one that feared God with all his house, which gave much alms to the people, and prayed to God alway.—Acts x. 1, 2.

You will perceive, brethren, that in this picture of Cornelius there are certainly some features, and I trust many, which apply to a great number of persons in this congregation. The man whose character and history is here introduced for our consideration is a centurion of the Italian band, and a resident at Cesarea; that is, he was a soldier stationed in a foreign country. A centurion, you know, was one of the subordinate officers of a Roman cohort or regiment; the Italian band or cohort had been levied in Italy, but was serving in Palestine, which was a dependency of Rome—just as India is of England—and Cesarea was the head-quarters of the Roman government, and a great military station on the coast of the province—just like this or any other fort or cantonment in India occupied by English troops. So far, then, the condition of Cornelius exactly resembles

that of the majority of my hearers. His very name testifies to its foreign origin: it is emphatically a Roman name, often met with in Roman history, and it must have sounded strangely in the ears of the people by whom he was surrounded, just as our English names are mangled and mispronounced by the natives of India among whom our lot is cast. So far you will acknowledge the similarity between his position and yours. But when we go to the second part of the text, it is to be feared that this resemblance becomes less close and general. We have noticed the particulars of his outward position: let us now turn to the description of his inward life and character. Three things are recorded about him:—1. That he was a devout man, who feared God with all his house; 2. That he gave much alms to the people; and 3. That he prayed to God alway. First let me say a very few words on each of these points, then let me remind you of the sequel of the story, and lastly, let me ask you to apply the whole picture thus completed to yourselves, to consider whether you at all resemble Cornelius as he is set before us in the text, and can therefore hope to resemble him in his subsequent history.

I. *He was a devout man, who feared God with all his house.* Being a Roman, and born in Italy, he had of course been originally a heathen. It is probable that being brought by God's Providence into the country of the Jews, he had there become dissatisfied with the false religion *received by tradition from his fathers*, and had been led, by what he saw and heard around him, to the beginning of a living faith in the one God. Of course he had not yet learned that Jesus Christ had come in

the flesh to be the Saviour of the world. The Sun of Righteousness was but just beginning to pour upon mankind its healing light; it had not yet reached the eyes of Cornelius. But near him was a nation guided by the fainter beams of the Old Testament; he saw the worship of God, he heard of the strictness of the law, he felt that its Author was of purer eyes than to behold iniquity, he lifted up his eyes to Him in penitence and contrition, desiring, yet knowing not how, to be made a partaker of His holiness. He felt that there was no help in the dumb idols which he had been taught to worship in his early days, and so he became a devout man, a proselyte of the gate, as the phrase was, attending Jewish synagogues, and observing the customary hours of prayer; and as he knew that religion is not a solitary, selfish feeling, he took care that his family should join with him in these duties, he *feared God with all his house.*

II. We are told next that he *gave much alms to the people.* He did not confine his care to those of his own household. His charity, like his piety, began at home, but did not end there. He did not think himself exempted from the duty of taking a kindly interest in the welfare of those about him because he was a Roman and they were Jews, or because he was an officer quartered at Cesarea on military duty. He was compassionate towards all men, he cared for the poor; he was *not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work,* and therefore he was *blessed in his deed.*

III. Once more, he had learned that the source of all outward goodness is communion with our heavenly Father, and therefore he *prayed to God alway.* Doubtless

the main subject of his prayers was that he might be *guided into all truth*, that it might please Him who had awakened in his heart so lively a sense of his spiritual necessities, to show him also the means of satisfying them. He prayed for grace to walk in the light which he had already, and that a yet brighter light might shine upon his soul.

Such, then, was the moral and religious condition of this soldier at the time that he appears in the history of the Acts of the Apostles. He was one who had resolved to serve the Lord with his house, who was not unmindful of the poor and needy, and who prayed to God continually for help and guidance. You are familiar, I trust, with the remainder of his history. A message from God directed him to seek help from the apostle Peter, who was in his turn, by another Divine communication, freed from the Jewish prejudice which might have prevented the admission of a Gentile, without previous submission to the law of Moses, within the pale of the newly-founded Church of Christ. He hastened, at God's command, to Cesarea, he expounded to Cornelius the *word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ, the Lord of all:* he told him of Christ's divine mission, His miraculous works of love, His death, His resurrection, His future return to be the Judge of quick and dead, and of the promise of forgiveness of sins to all who believe in His Name. The words produced conviction in the hearts of the soldier, and of those who had gathered with him to meet the Apostle; they were filled with the Spirit of God: and Peter sealed to them the Divine gift by the Sacrament of Christian Baptism. Henceforth they

were *no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God,* they became members of Christ's body, dead with Him to sin, and enabled to walk, according to His pattern, in newness of life.

I desire to impress upon you two lessons by this sketch of the character and history of Cornelius.

I. The first is the need of conversion; that is, of a conscious turning to Jesus Christ. Many of us are in the habit of thinking that if a man leads a moral and upright life, he need not trouble himself about his faith: for 'he can't be wrong whose life is in the right.' But God did not judge so in the case of Cornelius. Though he was a devout man, a charitable man, and even a religious man according to his knowledge, yet for all this it was necessary that his heart should be changed, that a new principle should be infused into it, that he should see *the light of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.* And not only was this necessary, but God took great pains, so to speak, to bring it about: an angel was sent to Cornelius, an enlightening vision was granted to Peter, the messengers of the centurion travelled from Cesarea to Joppa, the Apostle, accompanied by a small number of Christians, returned with them from Joppa to Cesarea. All this expenditure of Divine and human power was useless, if the seriousness, the almsgiving, and the prayers of Cornelius were sufficient for his salvation or for the accomplishment of God's purposes. It was necessary that his efforts after good should be secured, perpetuated, developed; they must be bound together, as it were, by one constraining motive; and the only principle powerful

enough to preserve them and make them perfect was faith in Christ. Learn, then, from this, my brethren, not to trust to a decent or moral life, not to be contented with a mere assent to what is true and right, and an endeavour in your own strength to practise it, but seek for Christ, and communion with Christ, and the gift of Christ's Spirit. This alone can secure your good resolutions, can turn a moral life into a holy one, can overcome the difficulties which beset you, and lead you onward in the paths of righteousness. *Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is no other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,* but only the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

But, on the other hand, while the history shows that such efforts as those of Cornelius are not sufficient to restore sinful man to the image of God, yet it also proves that they are not overlooked by our merciful Father, they are abundantly encouraged and blessed. The chief lesson which we learn from the subject is the duty of doing our best, of acting according to the light that is given to us, and earnestly seeking for more. It is a lesson frequently taught us in the Bible. *In the way of Thy judgments have we waited for Thee. If any man will do God's will* (that is, desires and tries to do it), *he shall know of the doctrine. Whereunto we have already attained, let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing, and if in any thing we be otherwise minded* (if in any point our spiritual knowledge be imperfect or erroneous), *God,* in His own good time, *will reveal even this unto us.* The assurance conveyed in all these inspired words is very encouraging. God requires us to make the best use in our power of the knowledge and opportunities which

are intrusted to us; and if He finds us faithful in a few things, He will, as He sees fit, bestow upon us more. Now it is in reference to this point, my brethren, that I wish each man here present to complete that comparison between himself and Cornelius with which I began my sermon. We saw that he, like you, was a soldier quartered in a foreign land. Are you, like him, seeking and serving God according to your opportunities? I have sometimes heard soldiers complain of the temptations to which they are exposed, the greatness of the hindrances, and insignificance of the helps which a man finds if he tries to lead a Christian life.

Doubtless there is some truth in such representations: a soldier is exposed to difficulty from bad example, unavoidable idleness, false shame, strong passions, and many other temptations, some peculiar to his profession, some common to all men. Occasionally, though I trust not often, a soldier in India finds himself in some station where there is no minister of religion, where Church ordinances are suspended, and where there is no one to befriend him, or to guide him to the spring of living waters, where he may slake his spiritual thirst. I will not enumerate other hindrances and discouragements, temporary or permanent, which may befall you: it must suffice to say generally, that whatever be their character and their number, they cannot be equal to those which beset the path of Cornelius. He was by birth and education a heathen; you at least are baptized Christians, and can probably look back to some lessons of Christian goodness received in boyhood from parents, or schoolmasters, or pastors. In an English regiment the appointed means of grace may for a time be accidentally

interrupted, in a Roman cohort there were necessarily none. Whatever bad examples may sometimes be seen in the English army, its condition can never have sunk to the level of Roman morality. Yet, in spite of these drawbacks, we have seen what Cornelius was, and what he did. You see that you resemble him in his circumstances and his difficulties; are you like him in his fear of God, his almsgiving, and his prayers? Are you using the means of grace here offered to you—the services of this church, the help and advice of your pastor, the many opportunities here given for a quiet and unostentatious service of God? The example of Cornelius proves that, in spite of far greater drawbacks and hindrances than can anywhere beset you, a soldier may overcome temptation and resist selfishness, and taste the blessedness of prayer. It shows us, further, that if he does thus turn his face heavenward, God will not leave him unaided and alone, but will train him up, by imparting fuller and fuller knowledge, and bestow His Spirit upon him, and lead him to Jesus Christ, the Saviour and Friend of sinful men.

My brethren, a great honour is put upon the military profession by this story of Cornelius. It is a Divine refutation of the notion that a soldier cannot often be expected to be a religious man. On the contrary, God selected a soldier to be the first Gentile convert—the first person not born and trained in the Jewish religion who should profess the faith of Christ, and direct his life by His teaching. Ever since his time, there have been soldiers (we thank God for it) who have been eminent as disciples of the same merciful Saviour; not only faithful servants of their sovereign and their country, but

soldiers of the cross, not ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified, but ready manfully to fight under His banner. I trust that there are some such in this church to-day. At least, I trust that there are many who, like Cornelius, are desirous to serve God, are trying to learn His will by a reverence for His holy Name, by kindly and unselfish thought of others, by praying for the help and guidance of Christ's Spirit. Do not doubt, brethren, that this imitation of Cornelius is in the power of all, and that if you do thus begin to walk in His footsteps, God will lead you gently and safely on to a more perfect knowledge of His will, a firmer power to resist temptation, and a deeper experience of His love.

SERMON XXIII.

CALCUTTA CATHEDRAL: ST. JOHN BAPTIST'S DAY, 1866.

THE LAMB OF GOD.

Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.—John i. 29.

In these words the Baptist, whose ministry is to-day especially brought to our recollection, proclaimed, on the banks of Jordan, the character and the work of the unknown and unobserved Youth who, though *coming after him, was preferred before him.* He had already, more than a month before, baptized Jesus in the waters of the Jordan, and had witnessed His recognition by the Father and the Spirit as the promised Messiah. Acting on this Divine intimation, John had been careful, when the Jews sent priests and Levites to enquire into the object of his own mission, not only to renounce all claim to the Messiahship, for to this he had never pretended, but to say distinctly that there stood among them, unnoticed in the vast crowd of his hearers, *one whom they knew not*, in whom the words of God, spoken through His holy prophets, were at last fulfilled. And on the day after he had borne this testimony, while he

is still, no doubt, absorbed in the thoughts of Him whose mission was to supersede his own, he raises his eyes, and, lo! he sees coming to him the very subject of his meditations, his Redeemer, whom he had reluctantly baptized, since the greater, he thought, should not receive blessing from the less, but whom he now joyfully greets as *the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world.* The exact meaning and reference of these famous words has been a matter of dispute; and the consideration of them, as it is certainly appropriate to this day's services, so it may be at once interesting to those who feel any pleasure in studying the sense and connection of Scripture, and practically useful to every one who is accustomed to apply it to the regulation of his heart and life.

The least satisfactory explanations of the Baptist's words are those which make them refer merely to the example of Christ. When we read such a paraphrase as this—'Behold Him who though innocent shall throughout His life experience the cruelty of the world, but endure the evils inflicted on Him with a lamb-like patience;' or again this similar one—'Behold Him who, by setting the example of a lamb's meekness and gentleness, shall remove men's wickedness out of the earth,' we can hardly fail to be struck at once with their insufficiency. For neither 'enduring the evils inflicted on Him,' nor 'removing wickedness out of the earth,' can, by any fair system of interpretation, be represented as equivalent to 'taking away the sin of the world.' This will scarcely be denied even when we merely regard the words as they stand in our English version, but becomes absolutely certain when we learn that the word here rendered 'to take away,'

answer the phrase which in the Old Testament is translated 'to bear,' as when Aaron is said to *bear the judgment of the children of Israel upon his heart*, where the Israelite who conceals his knowledge of a wrong act is threatened with *bearing his iniquity*, where the sin-offering is declared *to bear the sin of the people*, and where the servant of the Lord is said by Isaiah to *bear the sin of many*. So that to *take away the sins of the world* is to remove them by supporting their burden, by bearing the weight of them, in a word, by expiating them or atoning for them. This being so, the same reasons which prevent us from accepting those older attempts to destroy the true force of this passage, would be sufficient to show that another explanation of them, which some of my hearers may have lately seen, is also unsatisfactory, even if there were not other forcible arguments against it. In a book of great power and genius, which has recently excited extraordinary interest, not only among theological students, but among the majority of educated Englishmen—you have all heard of 'Ecce Homo'—we find the following commentary on our text: 'When we remember that the Baptist's mind was doubtless full of imagery, drawn from the Old Testament, and that the conception of a lamb of God makes the subject of one of the most striking of the Psalms, we shall see what he meant to convey by this phrase. The Psalmist describes himself as one of Jehovah's flock, safe under His care, absolved from all anxieties by the sense of His protection, and gaining from this confidence of safety the leisure to enjoy without satiety all the simple pleasures which make up life, the freshness of the meadow, the coolness of the

stream. It is the most complete picture of happiness that ever was or can be drawn. It represents that state of mind for which all alike sigh, and the want of which makes life a failure to most; it represents that heaven which is everywhere, if we could but enter it, and yet almost nowhere, because so few of us can. The two or three who win it may pass obscure lives in humble dwellings, or in a narrow monastic cell, but they are vexed with no flap of unclean wings about the ceiling. From some such humble dwelling Christ came to receive the Prophet's baptism. The Baptist was no Lamb of God. He was a wrestler with life, one to whom peace of mind does not come easily, but only after a long struggle. . . . . He was among the dogs rather than among the lambs of the Shepherd. He recognised the superiority of Him whose confidence had never been distrusted, whose steadfast peace no agitations of life had ever ruffled. He did obeisance to the royalty of inward happiness. One who was to earn the name of Saviour of mankind had need of this gift more than of any other: He who was to reconcile God and man, needed to be first at peace Himself.' Even if the sense incidentally given to the words *who taketh away the sin of the world* is here perhaps a little less inadequate, because more vague and indefinite, than in those other explanations, we can hardly fail to be dissatisfied with the meaning proposed for the Lamb of God. In the twenty-third Psalm, to which the writer refers, no particular lamb of God is mentioned at all; the Lord indeed is represented as a Shepherd, and the Psalmist as one of His flock; and therefore as *a* lamb, or *a* sheep, but here the Baptist speaks emphatically of

the Lamb, some well known Lamb, the object of God's special care, sent into the world for a special purpose. It is fair to say that the author appears conscious that his explanation is at least imperfect, for he adds, that 'there seems to be an allusion to the usages of the Jewish sacrificial system,' and we may therefore expect a fuller exposition of the words when he reaches a part of his subject more distinctly theological. Moreover, the same argument which has led us to reject the above explanation of *the Lamb of God* as even a provisional one, and to deny that the Baptist was quoting the twenty-third Psalm, must, I think, also convince us, that the origin of the expression is not to be sought in the fifty-third of Isaiah. There, no doubt, a lamb is distinctly mentioned. *He was oppressed, and He was afflicted, yet He opened not His mouth: He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth.* Moreover, we read here, not only of a lamb, but of the death of a lamb, and of a death caused by the sin of others. The lamb, too, is spoken of in close connection with such passages as these: *He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows; with His stripes we are healed; for the transgression of my people was He stricken;* and lastly, with one already quoted in illustration of the identity of the words 'to bear,' and 'to take away,' *He bare the sin of many.* Still it will be remembered by all who are familiar, and what Christian is not? with this famous chapter, that the prominent figure in it is not the Lamb of God, but the Servant of God, *Behold my Servant shall deal prudently, He shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.* This Servant it is, or this Man of Sorrows, of whom all these deep mysteries are

spoken, who is *despised and rejected of men, wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities*, and who is at last *to see of the travail of His soul, and to be satisfied.* It is quite incidentally and casually, as it were, that this Servant or Messenger of God is compared to a lamb, the metaphor lasts but for a moment, and the main thought dwells not on the slaughter of a patient animal, but on the unjust death of a righteous man. We still desire, as the source of so marked and striking a phrase as the Lamb of God, something more definite than a mere passing illustration and comparison. If, indeed, we had no choice between tracing the Baptist's language either to the twenty-third Psalm, or to the fifty-third Isaiah, we should not hesitate to prefer the latter from the general subject and character of the chapter. But we do not find in either an adequate account of the matter, so we return to the hint by which the author of 'Ecce Homo' has declared the insufficiency of his own comment—'there seems to be an allusion to the usages of the Jewish sacrificial system.' But to which of them? The words *who taketh away* (or beareth) *the sin of the world*, at once lead our thoughts to the sin-offering. But we find that for this particular kind of sacrifice a lamb was not appointed: the sacrifice offered on the great day of Atonement for the sins of the people, was not a lamb but a goat, and so, too, the appointed sin-offering on each new moon was a kid of the goats. It is true that a lamb was the victim in the daily morning and evening sacrifice, but this ceremony does not seem to have been specially, or at least primarily, connected with the idea of expiation, it was not a sin-offering but a burnt-offering, the main feature

in it being the offering of the whole victim to God, which represented, as the priest showed by laying his hand on its head, the devotion of the sacrificer, body and soul, to Him; so that the best commentary upon this part of the Jewish ritual is St. Paul's exhortation *to present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God.* Nothing, therefore, seems left to us but the belief that John, in speaking of Jesus as the Lamb of God, meant to compare Him to the lamb offered at the Passover. But to this explanation is at once opposed the formidable objection, that the paschal sacrifice appears to have no connection with bearing, or taking away, sin. Read the twelfth chapter of Exodus, it is said, in which the institution of the festival is described, and you will carry away the impression of a commemorative feast, established in thankfulness to God for a great deliverance, not of a sacrifice offered in atonement for sin. But surely this objection disappears when we consider the character of the deliverance thus commemorated. The Exodus from Egypt was that great crisis in the history of the Israelites, by which they were separated from a sinful world, and declared to be a holy nation, the peculiar people of the Lord. The offering of the paschal lamb combined into one solemn ceremony the thoughts which were conveyed separately in all the other parts of the Mosaic ritual. It was the great annual peace-offering of each separate family, the thank-offering for the existence and preservation of the nation, the typical sacrifice of the elected and reconciled children of the promise. Offered by the head of each family, it especially expressed the sacredness of the whole nation as a kingdom of priests, and retained the spirit

of the old patriarchal priesthood. Its character of sin-offering was especially shown in the sprinkling of blood upon the lintels and door-posts, by which was also denoted the purification of the children of Israel from the abominations of Egypt, while again the absolute prohibition of leaven in the houses during the celebration, is declared by St. Paul himself to symbolise purity. Thus, then, the deliverance of Israel according to the flesh from the bondage of Egypt, typified the deliverance of the spiritual Israel from the bondage of sin; the haste with which the meal was eaten, the staves and sandals and girt-up loins, are fit emblems of the life of the Christian pilgrim, ever hastening to his heavenly destination; the blood sprinkled on the doorways foreshadowed that blood by which we are redeemed, saved, and sanctified; and the Lamb, sacrificed by the worshipper without the intervention of a priest, is the closest type of the atoning Sacrifice, who by His death destroyed death, and made our peace with God.

We do not hesitate, therefore, to regard this declaration of the Baptist as the first of the testimonies borne by the holy men of the New Testament to the truth that the Lord Jesus Christ is 'the very Paschal Lamb which was offered for us, and hath taken away the sin of the world.' We class it with the evidence of John the Evangelist, who, when the soldiers passed our Lord's body on the cross without inflicting the usual injury, recognised the fulfilment of the law of the Passover, that *a bone of the lamb should not be broken.* We class it also with the triumphant exhortation of St. Paul, *Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness,*

but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. We compare it with the testimony of St. Peter, who, reproducing the actual language of Exodus, speaks of Christ as *a lamb without blemish and without spot, who was foreordained before the foundation of the world,* and therefore foreshadowed in the ceremonial of that religion which was God's appointed preparation for our own. We compare it, finally, with the hymn of adoration which arose in heaven before the Lamb in the midst of the throne: *Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hath made us unto our God kings and priests.* And when it is objected that all these likenings of Christ to the Paschal lamb followed His death and resurrection, after light had been thrown back from the Cross on the full meaning of the Jewish history, but that the Baptist could not have understood this before the Lord's ministry had even begun, we answer, that this objection entirely overlooks his inspired and prophetic character. And when, from an opposite point of view, it is urged that if John had been permitted thus to sound the depths of the coming Redemption, he would not afterwards have sent to Jesus to ask, *Art Thou He that should come, or look we for another?* we reply, that even prophets were not always secured against a failure of faith, and that John's own weary imprisonment, and the apparent delay of Jesus in assuming the Messiahship, might well account for a momentary doubt whether his belief in the claims of one so modest and retiring had been in truth founded

on a Divine inspiration, or had merely resulted from his own feelings of admiration and love.

But I said that the exposition of this text was not only interesting as a point of theological criticism, but in its bearing on our moral and spiritual life. Brethren, it can hardly be denied that one of the chief defects of modern habits of thought, especially of what is considered liberal thought, is a grievously diminished sense of the enormous evil, or, what is called in Scripture, the *exceeding sinfulness, of sin.* This is partly a result of our growth in refinement and civilisation; for the repression of gross outward offences, the general improvement in the tone of society, the increase of conventional decorum, set us, as it were, more at ease with ourselves and with each other, prevent us from looking within, and tend to overthrow that conviction of sin which our Lord has declared to be the first work of the Holy Spirit, and therefore the foundation of the Christian life. So, too, the general diffusion of superficial knowledge, and the necessity of feeding the tastes which this engenders by a light and frivolous literature, must be regarded as tending in the same direction; as stifling within us serious and anxious self-scrutiny; as closing our eyes to the infinite mass of iniquity in the world and in ourselves which still remains unsubdued, and to the awful realities of life and death and judgment and hell and heaven. Yet the conviction of sin has always been the source of true Christian heroism, and of all the really great results which the Gospel has wrought in the world. It has been so in every age of Christendom. Remember the bitter tears which Peter shed when his sin was brought home to his conscience, the

self-reproach with which Paul, in looking back on his past life, calls himself *the chief of sinners*, even after he had spent years in the active service of Christ. Some of you may have read the Confessions of Augustine, in which he, who of all the fathers of the Church was most like St. Paul, invites us 'to see what he was in himself and by himself, and if we find anything in him that pleases us, to praise Him to whom alone belongs the praise, since He created us and not we ourselves, and when we had destroyed ourselves, He who created us at first created us anew.'* Passing over centuries, we find that the great movement of the Reformation was quickened into life by Luther's deep consciousness of sin, and struggle for deliverance. And in quite recent times, and in this very country, the greatest of Anglican missionaries, after sacrificing to Christ home joys and worldly prospects, still regretted that he was not always able to trust Him for all that was to come, and to love Him with that perfect love which casteth out fear, and still shrank with awe from the thought of appearing before the Judge of quick and dead.† Brethren, if we are to be true Christians, pure, humble, unselfish, and self-denying, we must feel more and more grieved at the burden of our sins, we must earnestly seek to be relieved from them, we must firmly and practically believe that the Lamb who was slain has borne them and taken them away, and that in His strength we may escape their guilt, and rise up from death and condemnation to newness of life and the active service of God.

* Epist. ccxxxi.; Dario Comiti.

† Martyn's *Letters*, p. 324.

SERMON XXIV.

CALCUTTA CATHEDRAL, 1866.

THE SLAUGHTER OF THE GIBEONITES.

It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites.—2 Sam. xxi. 1 (part).

THE mysterious story from which these words are taken, one which has undoubtedly tried the faith of many good Christians, and given occasion to many adversaries of Christianity to blaspheme, is at this moment fresh in the memories of all who have listened to the first lesson. Its difficulties must be patent to every one. One of the least of these is the confirmation which it affords to a doctrine, often abused to uncharitable and superstitious purposes, that calamities are always sent upon nations or individuals for some definite act of sin. I call this one of the least, because there is doubtless, in all ages, a strict moral chain of cause and effect between suffering and wrong-doing, and, under a dispensation of temporal rewards and punishments, this connection between a crime and its penalty was made more manifest and direct than it commonly is now. But, even if we are not startled by the fact that the land was visited by the failure of three years' crops for the crime of a king who

might seem to have already expiated the wickedness of his reign by defeat, despair, and suicide; there are points in the rest of the story which are hardly in accordance with our idea of God as All-just, All-merciful, All-righteous, and All-pure. It seems to sanction the practice of human sacrifice. We might infer from it that the cruel death of these seven sons of Saul was an offering acceptable to God, and rendered Him propitious to the land. And yet we remember that Moses reckons among the abominations of the heathen *which the Lord hateth* the crime of burning their sons and their daughters in the fire to their gods, that the prophets denounce as the vilest of all wickedness that worship of Moloch in which the firstborn of the body was given for the sin of the soul. We admit freely that the morality of the Old Testament is not the morality of the New, that God's revelation of spiritual truth was gradual, that He spake to the fathers by the prophets in fragments and partial unfoldings of His will. We remember that our Lord rebuked those who would have relaxed the law of Christian marriage in accordance with the precedent set by Moses, and those who desired to destroy the inhospitable village after the example of Elijah; and therefore we expect to read of acts permitted before His coming which are not agreeable to His will as more perfectly revealed. Thus when Deborah commends the treacherous act of Jael, and when the Psalmist imprecates curses on his enemies, we see at once that the example of these ancient servants of God is not held up for our imitation in these respects, but that while we follow them in the great principles of faith and zeal and unshaken devotion, we are not to

copy the details by which they carried these principles into practice. But the case before us cannot be explained precisely in this way. Here it seems at first sight as if God directly sanctioned and commanded an act which if it were related anywhere except in the Bible we should condemn as an unhappy instance of superstitious cruelty. Nor must we venture to suppose that a deed wicked in itself becomes right, because God commands it. The notion that morality has not an absolute, independent existence, but is only the expression of the will of God, reverses the true order of our religious conceptions. We love God, because He is good and just and holy: we believe in Christianity, because its revelations satisfy the deepest convictions of our conscience and reason: we do not first form a notion of an absolute all-powerful Sovereign, and then accept the announcement of His will (whether in accordance with the teaching of an enlightened conscience or not) as identical with purity and righteousness. We do not indeed set up conscience as a verifying faculty to decide infallibly what God has said and what He has not said, we know that it needs the constant illumination of His Spirit, and that the character of its teaching and the strength of its warnings depends mainly on our own prayers and our own lives. We acknowledge too that in many cases our feelings, as to God's dealings with us, must be *what Thou doest we know not now, but we shall know hereafter*. But still there remains, after all, the great fundamental truth of morality that God's nature is good, that He cannot do wrong, and that therefore, to quote the words of Butler, 'if in revelation there be found any passage, the seeming meaning of which is

contrary to natural religion, to the voice of an enlightened conscience, we may most certainly conclude such seeming meaning not to be the real one.'

A great number of solutions have accordingly been proposed for the difficulties of the history now before us. A German writer explains the need of a severe penalty, by dwelling forcibly, and no doubt very justly, on the extreme wickedness of Saul's conduct, and reminds us of the oath sworn by Joshua and the princes of Israel at the time of the conquest, that the Gibeonites should be spared, and the confirmation of this oath by the arrangement that they should be for ever *hewers of wood and drawers of water to the congregation*, so that the guilt of their massacre combined the double wickedness of cruelty and a broken pledge. Dean Stanley adds to these considerations the fact that the Gibeonites, with whom the contract was made, were heathens, and therefore urges the especial importance of impressing upon the Hebrew nation that faith must be kept with unbelievers no less than with the people of God, for even in Christian times men have maintained that a compact made with heretics and idolaters is not binding. An older divine, Thomas Scott, considers that the seven descendants of Saul were themselves implicated in the slaughter of the Gibeonites, and therefore justly punished—a theory rendered doubtful by their probable age, and other circumstances of the history. Others, again, have resorted to the painful supposition that David himself contrived the plot in order to extirpate the rival royal family—a gratuitous charge, wholly unsupported by any part of the narrative, sufficiently refuted by David's lament over Saul and Jonathan, his

kindness to Mephibosheth, his conduct at the death of Ishbosheth, his forbearance when Saul himself was in his hands, nay, we may say, in spite of the one great blot, by his whole life and character. Finally, we find that one commentator confesses in a modest and reverential spirit that this is a passage in David's history which he cannot understand. 'I can perceive,' he says, 'in the story a recognition of the continuance of a nation's life, of its obligations and its sins from age to age. All national morality, nay, the meaning and possibility of history, depends upon this truth, the sense of which is, I fear, very weak in our own day. But I cannot in the least tell why the death of Saul's children should have been the needful expiation of the nation's crimes. Perhaps we are not bound to assume that the proceeding was in all particulars a just one because we are told that a Divine intimation was the cause of it. The Scripture is most careful that we should refer such intimations to their true source, and yet that we should understand how possible it is for a man to pervert them and found wrong inferences upon them, if his own mind is not in a thoroughly pure and healthy condition.' *

Perhaps this last hint may guide us to a possible escape from the difficulty. Let us examine the history a little more minutely. In the first place, all critics are agreed that this event must have occurred at an earlier period of David's reign than is implied by its position in the sacred narrative. The massacre of these Gibeonites, whatever was its occasion—whether it formed part of the slaughter of the priests and other inhabitants of Nob through the agency of Doeg the Edomite

* Professor Maurice.

(which is not unlikely, as they were the servants of the tabernacle,) or was the result of some other outbreak of jealous fury on Saul's part—must by the end of David's life have faded into the past, whereas it is here spoken of as a quite recent crime. Again, the kindness shown by David to Mephibosheth for Jonathan's sake plainly carries us back to the ninth chapter of this Second Book of Samuel, where the favours bestowed upon the lame and helpless orphan are recounted more in detail. And lastly, the curses heaped by the Benjamite Shimei upon the head of the king as he fled from Absalom, recorded in the sixteenth chapter, of which the burden was, *The Lord hath returned upon thee all the blood of the house of Saul*, would be absolutely unmeaning unless David had at least sanctioned some act of severity against the family of his predecessor, since of the deaths of Saul himself, Jonathan, and Ishbosheth he was wholly guiltless. It seems that at the end of the Second Book of Samuel, after the great tragedy of David's reign has been told, a few facts or anecdotes, as it were, are collected, not in chronological order, and appended to it. For instance, the next chapter to this twenty-first consists of the eighteenth Psalm, a general thanksgiving for God's mercies. We believe, then; that soon after David obtained the undivided sovereignty over the nation, while the memory of Saul's cruelties still rankled in the minds of those who had suffered from them, this famine occurred, and the enquiry into its cause was made. Now is it quite certain that though the question was asked of the Lord, the answer was altogether Divine? To enquire of the Lord, was to enquire of the high priest, in the manner directed by

the law. We read in the book of Numbers, that *the leader of the people shall stand before Eleazar the priest, who shall ask counsel for him after the judgment of Urim and Thummin before the Lord.* There is no reason to believe that the answer given on such occasions was always free from the clouds of human infirmity. We know that once a lying spirit, speaking by the mouth of the prophets, lured Ahab to destruction by persuading him to go to battle against the Syrians. Jeremiah tells us of a time when the prophets prophesied falsely, and the priests bore rule by their means. In the present case, the high priest whom David consulted was Abiathar, the only fugitive from the bloody massacre of the priests at Nob, and therefore the bitterest enemy of Saul and of his house. Is it not at least possible that he might allow his own desire of vengeance to influence the oracular response, and to persuade himself that God's blessing would not fall upon a land which was polluted by an unexpiated crime, still fresh in his own recollection, but likely soon to be forgotten under a happier and more righteous rule? We know that afterwards he was certainly misled into regarding Adonijah rather than Solomon as David's appointed successor. Hence we may without irreverence suppose that the answer attributed to the Lord was partly the result of Abiathar's own hatred of the persecutor's memory; but whether this was really the case, or whether we must accept the famine as a special instance of that principle of *visiting the father's sins on the children*, which undoubtedly is a feature in the Divine government, it is very important to observe, that we have no right to trace the painful residue of the story to any command of God, nor even to throw the

chief blame of it on David. For (1) he was deceived by the Gibeonites, and (2) the execution of Saul's sons is not connected in the history with the removal of the famine. Let us notice these two points. (1) The Gibeonites tell the king, *We will have no silver nor gold of Saul, nor of his house, neither for us shalt thou kill any man in Israel.* Under the impression then that no cruelty will be demanded, he gives the promise, *What ye shall say, that will I do for you.* Then the petitioners alter their tone, and demand the death of Saul's sons; whereupon the king, having made a rash vow like Jephthah or Herod, feels bound to keep it. But (2) it does not appear that the famine ceased in consequence of this cruel deed. The victims were put to death *at the beginning of barley harvest.* For six months, up to the commencement of the periodical rains, Rizpah watched their bodies till nothing but the bones was left. On hearing this, David, moved by so pathetic a story, which revived, it would seem, his old love for Saul and Jonathan, thinking too, perhaps, that now at least the crimes of the fallen dynasty had been sufficiently punished, orders the reverent interment of these seven, and also of the remains of his predecessor and his friend, which had hitherto lain in an obscure sepulchre at Jabesh-gilead, in Saul's own ancestral sepulchre at Zelah of Benjamin. Then, at last, long after the death of the seven, God was entreated for the land, and the famine was removed. So that there seems no connection between the act of vengeance and the subsequent, not consequent, mercy.

In this way I trust that a minute examination of the facts of this history may remove, in some degree, the difficulty which it has often occasioned to thoughtful

men. Painful, indeed, it must still remain as a tale of a comparatively barbarous age, showing how long and careful a preparation was necessary before mankind were fit for the pure light, and all-embracing mercy of the Christian revelation. But, like many of the gloomier parts of the Old Testament, its darkness is broken by rays of spiritual light. Let us try, in conclusion, to open our eyes to these. First, in contrast to the cruel vengeance of the Gibeonites, let us note the motherly devotion of Rizpah, the *mater dolorosa* as she has been well called of the Old Testament. The victims, we must remember (for so the original text of the passage shows), were not hanged but crucified, though it is possible that they were executed first, and exposed on crosses afterwards. This was done that they might suffer the peculiar disgrace noticed in the seventy-ninth Psalm, *The dead bodies of Thy servants are given to be meat to the fowls of the air.* But from this indignity Rizpah saved them, by taking up her station beneath the crosses on the top of the rock of Gibeah, where she crouched upon her thick widow's garment of black sackcloth from March to October, heeding neither the scorching heat of the day, nor the drenching dews of the night, but only watching that neither vulture nor jackal should molest the bodies. It is refreshing to turn from the picture of the Gibeonites' cruelty to that of Rizpah's unwearied love; and the contrast may remind us, that when God sends upon us the direst calamities, He also calls forth the holiest Christian graces, patience, resignation, self-sacrificing affection, that times of distress and famine are also times when we should open our hearts and our hands in the relief of those who suffer; that if there

were no bitter sorrow amongst us, there would be no heroic charity; that because the world was lost, Christ came to redeem it; and that because it is still full of misery, Christians are endowed with God's Spirit for the help and service of their brethren.

And the other encouraging thought which we should carry away from the history is this. In direct opposition to the words of the text, *It is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites,* stand the two declarations of our Lord: *Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish? Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower of Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.* For from these infallible words we learn that the sufferers from any great calamity* are not always those who in the common sense of the words especially deserve it—*suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans?*—but, on the other hand, there is a close connection between calamity and sin, and that God's judgments are sent to rouse a whole people to repentance and amendment of life. It is too common to hear opinions expressed about a national affliction which are not in accordance with the utterances of Divine wisdom. It may be represented as a judgment upon Sabbath-breakers, upon the propagators of heretical doctrines, upon any other set of persons addicted to some evil practice from which we ourselves are free. Doubtless

* The famine in Orissa, by which nearly a million persons are said to have perished, was at its height when this sermon was preached.

the disregard of the merciful ordinance of the Lord's Day, and the prevalence of infidel opinions (if general), must be regarded as signs of national wickedness, of worldliness, and ungodliness, eating like a canker into the heart of society, so that these, among other manifestations of bad principle, may draw down upon a people the anger of God, and provoke Him to send in His mercy warnings and chastisements for sin. But when we find that any such chastisement has fallen upon us, it is our duty and our wisdom not to point to some particular set of evil-doers and say, 'These are they who slew the Gibeonites, here are they for whose wickedness the land is plagued,' but to enquire what law of God's providential government has been disregarded, what precaution has been omitted, in what particular gain has been preferred to godliness, self-interest to the public good, to consider thoughtfully the whole tone of society, the whole condition of our moral and spiritual life, and, above all, to look within ourselves at the state of our own hearts, and to confess with humble contrition that, *unless we repent*, unless we draw nearer to God, and obey His laws, and practise justice, and mercy, and truth, and brotherly kindness, and care for the poor and ignorant, *we shall all likewise perish.* That God rouses men from sin by the pressure of calamity, that He will not overlook the violation of His own laws, but has attached penalties to their transgression, is true and Christian judgment; that He is by any particular visitation punishing any particular offence, is often an unchristian and uncharitable one. So then, brethren, in any time of public distress we have two plain duties before us. According to the example of Rizpah, the daughter of Aiah, let us

exercise compassion and self-denial in behalf of those who suffer; and according to the precept of our blessed Lord, let us hasten to repent of our carelessness and indifference and ungodliness; and, acknowledging in our calamities the pressure of a Father's hand, come before Him with hearts purified, and lives amended, and causes of offence removed, to beseech Him, according to His promise, in His judgment to remember mercy.

SERMON XXV.

ST. STEPHEN'S, CALCUTTA, 1866.

CHRISTIAN OBLIGATIONS.

Gather the people together, men, and women, and children, and thy stranger that is within thy gates, that they may hear, and that they may learn, and fear the Lord your God, and observe to do all the words of this law: and that their children, which have not known any thing, may hear, and learn to fear the Lord your God, as long as ye live in the land whither ye go over Jordan to possess it.—Deut. xxxi. 12, 13.

Such were some of the parting directions which Moses spoke to the Israelites when, after their forty years of protracted wandering, they were at last about to cross the Jordan, and when he himself was on the point of ascending to the top of Pisgah, to catch the one permitted view of that land of promise which he was *to see with his eyes*, but not to enter. God had told him that *his days were approaching when he must die:* he was to give to Joshua the son of Nun the charge *to be strong and of a good courage*, and to finish the work which he had himself begun, by leading the people unto *the land which the Lord had sworn unto their fathers to give them.* In that supreme hour of intercourse with his friends and followers, the chief desire of Moses was

to impress upon them that God's blessings and promises were conditional, and that the one essential requisite without which they would be withdrawn and unfulfilled was that the people of Israel should *observe to do all the words of the law.* For this purpose not only were men and women to be gathered together for instruction in it, but children from their earliest years, those *which have not known any thing*, were to be taught, as the foundation of all true knowledge, *to learn to fear the Lord their God:* on this learning depended their continued possession of the land whither they were going. As long as they lived there, God's law was to be handed down from generation to generation: if it was forgotten or disobeyed, then the Lord threatened to pluck His people from off the land, and to *scatter them among all people, from the one end of the earth even unto the other; where they should find no ease among the nations, neither should the sole of their feet have rest; but the Lord should give them there a trembling heart, and failing of eyes, and sorrow of mind, and their life should hang in doubt before them; and they should fear day and night, and have none assurance of their life: saying in the morning, Would God it were even! and at even, Would God it were morning! for the fear of their heart wherewith they should fear, and for the sight of their eyes which they should see.* There was no security against this terrible consummation of the Divine wrath on sin; no hope of continuance in obedience to God's law, unless the people would teach it to their children gradually and as they were able to bear it, from the first dawn of understanding, associating it with their earliest impressions, talking to them of it *when they sat in their house, and when they walked by the way,*

and when they lay down, and when they rose up, binding God's precepts *for a sign upon the hand, and as frontlets between the eyes.* The command of Christ's Apostle to *bring up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, is no new commandment, peculiar to the Christian covenant, but merely condenses into one short and pithy sentence the pervading principle of God's earliest legislation.

Brethren, in approaching thus early in my sermon the subject with which you were told that it would be specially connected, I shall not, I hope, lead you astray from those thoughts of Christian faith and duty which should be the end and object of all sermons. I know myself by experience how tiresome it is, when one is expecting to be refreshed by the bread of life, the exposition of God's Word, and the setting forth of Christ crucified, to be condemned to listen to a long statistical exposition of the wants of some religious society, the amount of its assets and its debts, and the number of missionaries or pastors or Scripture-readers or nurses that it employs. And hence, speaking generally, I think that a 'charity sermon,' as it is called, should set forth, like any other sermon, the great doctrines of faith, and holiness, and love of the brethren, ending with a brief exhortation to reduce these doctrines to practice by an open-handed liberality towards the particular object which the preacher has undertaken to advocate. But there are exceptions to this, especially when something is brought forward of a character more or less new, or connected with a duty which is perhaps not fully appreciated in comparison with other duties. And on these grounds the application which I shall make of the

text will be rather more special than I should ordinarily set before you. We all know how any subject connected with the passage of the Israelites from Egypt to Canaan is generally and most properly used by a Christian preacher, according to the pattern given in the New Testament itself. Egypt is the world which lieth in wickedness: the march through the desert is the pilgrimage from sin to holiness, from earth to heaven: Canaan is the promised land of rest and blessing, *which remaineth to the people of God.* But to-day I will invite you to consider not a spiritual application, but a historical parallel. I will ask you to turn your thoughts to our position and duties, not generally, as sinners redeemed from the land of misery and death by the precious blood of Christ, but especially as Christian Englishmen placed by God's Providence in possession of India. For as of old He delivered over to the Israelites the wild hills and fertile plains of Palestine, that *land flowing with milk and honey, which was the glory of all lands, not for their righteousness, or for the uprightness of their heart, for they were a stiffnecked people, but for the wickedness of the nations which He drove out from before them;* so has He given to us the rule over this vast peninsula, not for our own merits or deservings (for our national history, like our individual lives, affords only too many reasons for penitence and shame), but in order to carry out His great purposes for the salvation of mankind, *according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

So far, then, as we are ourselves concerned, brethren, our position and duties in India are closely akin to those which were set before the children of Jacob in

Palestine. I say 'so far as we are ourselves concerned:' for undoubtedly the new truths made known to us by Christ—His own title of the Prince of Peace, the assurance that *He came not to destroy men's lives, but to save them*, the revelation again that God is love—place our relations with the natives of this country on an entirely different footing from that in which the conquering Israelites stood to the Canaanitish nations whom they were commanded to drive out before them. But to-day I am not required to speak, except indirectly, of our connection with the heathen who are around us in this country: our subject is confined to one of our duties to our fellow-Christians, descendants of the same race as ourselves, and now sharers with us in the possession of the land which God has given to us. And the text directly teaches us not only that we must ourselves *gather together to hear, and learn, and fear the Lord our God*, nor yet that we must only see that our own children are 'virtuously brought up,' according to the promise made for them in their baptism, 'to lead a godly and a Christian life.' This we shall be generally quite ready to do from feelings of natural affection, from self-interest, from regard to public opinion, without entering into higher motives; but those children who are in less prosperous circumstances than ours, who cannot command the same advantages, who have been hitherto grievously overlooked and neglected, *who have not known any thing*, should also *hear, and learn to fear the Lord our God*. They should be enabled, by an education sound and practical, to perform faithfully and creditably the duties to which they may be called as citizens of a human commonwealth, and by

an education distinctly and definitely Christian, should be taught to value and use their privileges and fulfil their responsibilities as partakers of the new covenant, as redeemed by Christ, as inheritors, not merely of an earthly land, like Palestine or India, but of the kingdom of heaven; as called to go on from strength to strength, from that *fear of God* which is *the beginning of wisdom*, to that *love of Christ which passeth knowledge*, and in its perfection *casteth out fear*. We all know—I need glance but rapidly at the oft-repeated tale—how the number of such children is increasing, children whose parents cannot possibly send them to England for education, nor pay such school charges as will be remunerative to private schoolmasters. You know how the construction of railways, steam navigation, industrial enterprise, commercial speculation, agricultural development, and other influences too long to enumerate, are combining now to change this land from the India which our fathers knew into a semi-European country, and to create many moral and spiritual wants for which we, whom God has blessed with the gifts of fortune and knowledge and many other advantages and opportunities, are absolutely bound to provide, each according to his power, remembering that word of the Apostle, *He which soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he which soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loveth a cheerful giver.* This, brethren, is the general principle of Christian liberality. And now let me briefly sketch some more particular reasons for which it ought to be applied with special earnestness to the case before us.

They may be all summed up in enumerating some of the grievous consequences which must ensue if successive generations of men and women, boasting of their English blood and outward profession of Christianity, are allowed to grow up in ignorance and ungodliness.

First, consider the degradation to our national character and to our religion if the Anglo-Indian Christians are passed by the Hindus in what is called the race of life, in the distribution of various posts of trust and responsibility, in reputation for general intelligence and usefulness, and in consequent influence on the country. I have been told by more than one person, amongst others by a Government Inspector of Schools, who is a liberal contributor to the scheme which I am advocating, that this will be very probably the case unless means are taken to prevent it; owing, on the one hand, to the excellent schools and colleges provided for natives at a most moderate cost by Government and missionary societies, and, on the other, to the almost entire want, which has hitherto prevailed, at least out of Calcutta, of any similar education for Europeans and Eurasians.

Next, we cannot overlook the fact that such a comparison between intelligent Hindus and neglected Europeans may lead to very dangerous political consequences. This is not the time or place to enumerate these, nor is it necessary, for it is obvious that it will not be a healthy state of things, socially and politically, if a number of persons, priding themselves on their connection with the dominant race, and inclined by their national character to the vehement assertion of self-will, are surrounded by an envious and hostile population, smarting under the assumptions of those whose intelli-

gence and civilisation they feel to be inferior to their own. On such a point a bare hint is better than a laboured argument.

But, thirdly, let us ascend to higher and more distinctly Christian considerations. Most people now in India profess more or less sympathy with missionary operations: all Christians must confess the general duty and importance of carrying them on, and those who take any pains to investigate facts know that in spite of but small tangible results—in the shape of a long tale of yearly baptism—a great and blessed work is going on in the country which must finally lead to great and important consequences. In this church it is less necessary than in many other churches to dwell on these considerations, for here, from the nature of the case, they are, I doubt not, frequently and earnestly pressed upon the congregation. But consider how greatly that work must be hindered, how inevitable is the delay to the conversion of India of which some impatient spirits complain, and which we all deplore, if those who profess Christianity furnish by their lives and the lives of their children an argument against its truth. It has been said that the two principal evidences to the truth of the Gospel are Christians and Christendom, the beauty of the Scriptural doctrine, and the sight of a Church of living men and women exhibiting the effects of that doctrine in their daily conduct. But if the professing Church does not in any way exhibit those effects, and is not penetrated by those other ennobling influences, which Christianity has always appropriated and developed, its outward signs and evidences will be turned rather against the Divine origin of our religion,

than in its favour. *If the salt have lost his savour, wherewith shall it be salted?* Wherewith indeed, unless we, who are surrounded on all sides by infinite blessings from God, take care that the salt is preserved in the minds and hearts of the young by a sound and religious education.

But we are lingering on minor and incidental arguments, instead of bringing forward the most conclusive of all. Not, brethren, to help these children to earthly advantages, not to strengthen our own political power, not even to remove a hindrance from the evangelisation of India, are we chiefly bound to support every well-considered scheme for establishing Christian schools in this country; but for the personal and highest welfare of those who are in need of them—because they have immortal souls, because Christ died for them, because every Christian is bound to double the talents, be they one or two or five, which have been entrusted to him, and therefore must be taught and helped to fulfil his duty, to recognise his Christian responsibilities, to acquire the knowledge necessary for accomplishing the work to which God may call him. This is the final ground on which I urge you to do your utmost to remedy this great neglect, and to enable Christian children, *which have not known any thing, to hear, and learn to fear the Lord their God, as long as they live in the land which He has given them to possess it.* The immediate object of to-day's collection is a part only of a more general scheme for scattering schools over India: it is the foundation and permanent endowment of three schools in the hills, at Simla, at Mussoorie and Darjeeling, one in each of the principal provinces into which this

vast Presidency is divided—schools which may, I trust, by God's blessing, do for Christians in India what the munificent foundations of ancient times, to some of which many here present look back with gratitude and affection, have done for Christians in England. The sum required will doubtless be a large one; but the whole diocese is invited to contribute, and the collection is spread over three years. Some of this congregation, I trust, may be induced not only to give to-day, but to promise an annual subscription for those three years, if God prolongs till the end of that period their Indian life. Whatever is given, Government will double; an arrangement which seems to me far better than that it should exclusively undertake the establishment of the schools; for, in the first place, it calls out the duty of Christian liberality, to which God's blessing is so largely promised, and in the second, if the schools were purely the creatures of the State, it might be unable to impress upon them a definitely Christian character.

And now, brethren, I would only say, in conclusion, that if any one is after all disposed to complain that we have been wandering this morning from the main principles of the Gospel, from faith, and hope, and love, and the setting forth of Christ crucified, let him ask himself whether he really appreciates and acts upon the great points of doctrine and practice on which undoubtedly our exhortations have been founded. Has he yet learned to *know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, though He was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich?* Is he truly and practically convinced that *faith without works is dead?* Does he remember the most necessary and immediate

deduction from the great truth, that *as He has loved us, we ought also to love one another?* Does he feel and know that the love of God cannot dwell in him *who hath this world's good, and seeing his brother have need, shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him?* All these, brethren—no one can for a moment deny it—must be reckoned among the cardinal, primary, essential truths of the Gospel, articles of a standing or a falling Church, which we Christians are bound unfeignedly to believe, and earnestly to practise. And so let me sum up all the lessons, general and special alike, which I desire that we should learn to-day, by this one word of Christ, which perhaps, above all others, gives reality and depth to our Christian faith and profession, *If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.*

SERMON XXVI.

TEZPORE, ASSAM, 1866.

THE SCATTERED SHEEP OF CHRIST'S FOLD.

Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.—1 Pet. i. 1, 2.

When our Lord gave His final commission to His apostles, immediately before His Ascension, to *go and make disciples of all nations,* He specified certain stages of missionary progress: *ye shall be witnesses unto me,* He said, *in Jerusalem,* this was the first stage; *and in all Judæa,* this was the second stage; *and in Samaria,* this was the third stage; *and unto the uttermost parts of the earth,* this was the final stage of the great drama. It is interesting to observe that the Apostle Peter, who had received from Christ the thrice-repeated charge, *Feed my sheep, feed my lambs,* fulfilled his pastoral office according to the divisions of work prescribed by His Master. He bore witness to Christ, first in Jerusalem, then in all Judæa, then in Samaria, and at last unto the uttermost

part of the earth which was then accessible to the traveller. He bore witness in Jerusalem when, on the day of Pentecost, he declared that *Jesus, whom God had raised up, and who was by the right hand of God exalted, and had received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost*, had shed forth the new and wonderful power which the dwellers at Jerusalem then saw and heard. He bore witness to Christ in all Judæa, when he spoke these same words to those who had come up to the capital from the country districts, when he recalled Dorcas to life at Joppa, when on the way to Gaza he explained to the eunuch the words of the evangelical prophet, when he visited the saints at Lydda and announced that Jesus Christ had made Eneas whole. He bore witness to Christ in Samaria when he prayed that those whom Philip had baptized might receive the Holy Ghost, and checked with just severity the miserable attempt of the sorcerer Simon to corrupt and degrade the Church. And finally, in the epistle which opens with our text, writing from the banks of the Euphrates amidst the ruins of that great city of Babylon, which had once been mistress of the East and was now partially inhabited by the descendants of those Jews who had not returned with Ezra, and addressing the strangers scattered abroad through the wide-spread regions of Western Asia up to the very borders of Europe, he bore witness to Christ even *to the uttermost part of the earth*, a witness soon to be completed by his own martyrdom in the political centre of the earth, the Babylon of the West, the imperial city of Rome. Thus he tended and fed the various flocks of Christ who were dispersed far and wide over the spiritual sheep-walks of the world, the hills and valleys in which

were pitched the different pastoral encampments, ever increasing in number through the agency of Christ's faithful shepherds, apostles, prophets, and evangelists, among whom perhaps only one was more eminent than Peter himself. Thus he tended and fed the sheep, tending them by his visits, feeding them by the word of life in his epistles, and at last, according to the pattern of the Chief Shepherd, giving his life for them. The general aspect then of the passage before us, regarded in connection with St. Peter's work and history and with the early diffusion of Christian truth, is sufficiently remarkable; nor shall we find it less noteworthy if we begin to examine it in detail. The Apostle salutes his readers as *strangers*, pilgrims that is and sojourners, having no continuing city in this world, but travelling to their eternal home prepared for them by their Father's love. And in the conviction that this is the Christian's true attitude in reference to the things of time, he afterwards, in the course of the letter, beseeches them, *as strangers and pilgrims, to abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul*, and hinder its entrance into the heavenly inheritance. Moreover, he addresses them all as *elect*, chosen that is by the foreknowledge of God to be adopted as His sons in Christ, to be baptized into His covenant, and trained under the gracious influence of His Spirit to the understanding of His will. Elect or chosen they all were, for their calling proves their election; and thus wherever we see men called to the knowledge of Christianity, we are to think of them as God's elect, partakers of holier privileges, and therefore of heavier responsibilities, than those to whom the word of God has not come. But neither they nor we, their

successors in the visible Church, though spoken of as the elect people of God, are ever permitted to forget the need of working out our own *salvation with fear and trembling.* The very Apostle who in the outset of this Epistle thus affectionately acknowledges them as God's people, warns them to *lay aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings,* to take heed lest they *use their liberty as a cloak of maliciousness, to give diligence to make their calling and election sure.* They and we have been elected not to presumptuous self-confidence, or carelessness of living, but to obedience, through the sanctification of God's Spirit; and if in our perversity and wilfulness we turn away from this sanctification, and fail of attaining this obedience, most assuredly we shall forfeit our share in that sprinkling of Christ's blood upon our hearts and consciences and lives in which alone we are reconciled to God, and saved from the wrath to come; most assuredly our punishment will be heavier than if we had never known the name of Christ.

So then this is the general picture offered to our contemplation: an aged Apostle, a witness of Christ's sufferings and resurrection, sending words of encouragement, rebuke, and warning to a number of Christian congregations dispersed among the heathen over a wide extent of country, speaking to them all, good and bad, faithful and unfaithful alike, as partakers of common hopes and advantages, chosen by the same gracious God to the knowledge of His Son, held up and guided by His Spirit as long as they will keep their hearts open to His teaching, but liable to the heaviest condemnation if they cast away the high privilege of their

election; *for it had been better for them,* he says, *not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.* On the one side we see a pattern of deep and earnest anxiety for the welfare of those for whom Christ died, showing itself not in inactive wishes and aspirations for their good, but in personal trouble, faithful exhortation, and self-sacrificing labour. On the other side are presented to us those on whose behalf this labour is bestowed, communities of Christians living in the midst of moral danger, knowing God's will, yet often forgetting or disregarding it, and therefore needing to be constantly reminded of the service which their Saviour can claim at their hands. It is a picture not only interesting as a scene from the earliest Church history, or as throwing light on the later years of that apostle whose youth is brought before us so prominently by the four Evangelists, but as a lesson teaching us our duty to our fellow-Christians who are in like condition with the strangers *scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.* For the command to bear witness to Christ to the uttermost part of the earth, could not be entirely fulfilled by the generation to which it was addressed: it is one which will never be precisely and literally obeyed till the whole world is penetrated by the sound of the Gospel; but it is continually receiving fresh fulfilments, and new instalments, as it were, of obedience, as fast as the power of conquest, or discovery, or commerce, or some other secular influence, opens new regions to our research and cultivation, and makes them the habitation of Christian men. To St. Peter's ken, India was almost beyond the uttermost part of the

earth, but now, as time has rolled on, its vast extent of mountain and plain has also been brought within the pale of Christ's Church, now the picture presented to us in the text, or at least one-half of it, is here accurately reproduced. Here in India there are everywhere strangers scattered throughout its broad expanse, sharing our English blood and our Christian creed, men and women who are, and ought to know themselves to be, pilgrims and sojourners upon earth, redeemed by Christ's precious blood from sin and from slavery to the prince of this world, and travelling home to God. I need not, brethren, remind you at any length of the multiplicity of causes which are continually adding to their number, many directly tending to increase our own comforts and conveniences, nearly all to augment the wealth and prosperity of England. There is the great East Indian Railway stretching its huge length of iron for above one thousand miles from Calcutta to Delhi, with other minor enterprises of the same kind, loops, feeders, and branches, along which, and in the districts where railway works are still in progress, European overseers, drivers, firemen, mechanics, guards, are to be found, with their families, sometimes in considerable communities, sometimes in smaller groups, sometimes in isolated houses. Then there are the agricultural operations. The long valley of Assam watered by the Brahmaputra, the fertile plain of Cachar shaded by the Kossyah and Jynteah hills, the beautiful Himalayan districts of Kangra and Kumaon, contain numerous tea-plantations; and other branches of industry, as you know, are actively carried on in other parts of a land teeming with fertility and resources

which are receiving every day fresh developments. I need only mention, in passing, Government officials, with clerks and other Christian dependents, gathered together in the small civil stations which are planted at intervals all over India, or the captains and officers of coasting and river steamers, or the collectors of the salt duties, placed at short distances of ten or twenty miles along an extended cordon of custom-houses—from the heart of the Punjab far down into Central India, the tradesmen, surveyors, contractors, all with souls to be cared for, children to be taught, sorrows to be comforted, evil inclinations to be checked, open sins to be rebuked and restrained, spiritual needs to be satisfied. You, brethren, know well the moral and spiritual dangers to which such scattered and isolated settlers are exposed: how the want of society, and other useful checks, disposes them to cast off the restraints which even in the absence of Christian principle are effectual elsewhere to the preservation of at least an outward morality, to substitute for God's holy ordinance of marriage some unhallowed and lawless union with the women around them, to fall into other habits equally inconsistent with their election and calling and baptism into the outward and visible family of God. And while nothing would be more likely to commend the Gospel to the heathen among whom we are scattered, than the sight of a number of Christian homes of peace and purity and righteousness; so it is certain that when the reverse of this is constantly placed before them, the only effect of Europeans living among them must be that they will regard their religion as in no way superior to one of their own hereditary superstitions. Moreover, those of us who

live in Calcutta or the larger stations know, from our own daily experience of petitioners coming to our doors and asking for relief or employment, that even below the humblest of the class thus provided with definite occupations and means of living, there are a number of Europeans not only gathered in the chief cities, but wandering along the roads of India, who have fallen into destitution, often no doubt through their own reckless living, but sometimes through misfortune and inexperience of the climate, and in either case needing some one to help them and remind them of their forgotten duty to God. Let me quote a passage on this subject which appeared not long ago in one of our newspapers. 'The back slums of Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay, the hospitals and dispensaries which Government supports, the weary tramps who are to be found on the roads or in the ditches in rural India under the deadly sun of May, or drenched with the rains of July, the ever-recurring criminal sessions of the High Courts, the jails and houses of correction, the pauper funerals and uncared-for graves, all bear testimony in open day to a state of things disgraceful enough at home, but intolerable here. The railways, the army, the mercantile marine are ever contributing new victims to the moral lawlessness which is at first so delightful to the uneducated Englishman in India.' And now remember, brethren—for this is a special link between the picture presented to us in God's Word and that which is daily set before our eyes—that all these various classes who for a time or permanently have made this land their home, from the comfortable householder who is surrounded with this world's goods and is in danger of for-

getting God, through the desire of gain or the indulgence of evil passions, down to these unhappy wanderers who often (oh shameful end for Christian men!) openly offend against our laws, and find a home in our jails side by side with native forgers and robbers, would be described by the Apostle as *elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.* For all have been chosen to the knowledge of God in Christ, all have been placed at some time or other in their lives within reach of a careful Christian training, many have received it abundantly: they may be wandering hither and thither far away from the straight path of pilgrimage which leads through this world's wilderness to the heavenly Canaan, following divers lusts and passions, and doing despite to the Spirit of grace, but still they are our brethren in Christ, redeemed by His blood, and called to the inheritance of the saints in light. They may have fallen into vices worse than those of the heathen among whom they are scattered; but the effect of their original calling still remains, increasing their condemnation when it ceases to increase their privileges. It has been truly said of us Christians by the poet* who has lately passed from among us:—

Fain would our lawless hearts escape,
And with the heathen be,
To worship every monstrous shape
In fancied darkness free.
Vain thought, that shall not be at all!
Refuse we or obey,
Our ears have heard the Almighty's call,
We cannot be as they:

* Keble.

> We cannot hope the heathens' doom
> To whom God's Son is given,
> Whose eyes have seen beyond the tomb,
> Who have the key of heaven.

Those who, though scattered among the nations and exposed to the snares of the Tempter, have known the way of righteousness and been called by the name of Christ, must be helped to value their privileges, to be ashamed of whatever is unworthy of their high calling, to love and obey their Saviour. It was to such as these that this Epistle was written, for such as these that Peter thought, and prayed, and worked in his distant abode at Babylon.

And this leads us to the conclusion of the whole matter. I said that one-half of the picture under our contemplation is reproduced in India, that here now, as in Western Asia of old, Christ's sheep are scattered abroad in the midst of an evil world. Brethren, is the other half of the picture also repeated here? if there are sheep going astray, are there shepherds to fetch them home, Peters to warn them, to visit them, to entreat them to be saved? Are there any who shall bless them with the Apostle's benediction, *Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied?* who shall remind them of that heavenly grace which is effectual in Christ Jesus to the conquest of sin, and of the *peace of God which passeth all understanding?* This is the great end which we desire to accomplish through the agency of the Society which you are to-day invited to support. Its simple aim is to plant, about the country, pastors who shall minister to the spiritual wants of this scattered population, who shall travel from one small station to another, or from one factory to another, bearing with them the

blessing of Christ's Word and Sacraments, who shall be permanently resident at the chief centres of our European railway population, who shall be ready in various places to help and counsel these wandering outcasts who come to India in the belief that they are entering on a land of gold, and find that they have reached a land of temptation and reckless living and penury and disease and death. You, brethren, engaged as you are in various active occupations, can probably do but little personally to mitigate the evils of which we have been speaking, and those which you can diminish by your own charitable interference are mainly physical evils. You can, however, give of your substance, your sympathies, and your prayers; and, most of all, you can help by your influence, your example, your own exhibition of the power of Christ over men's hearts and lives, to strengthen the Church in the great mission of relieving misery, enlightening ignorance, and preaching Christ crucified to all Christians dispersed abroad, far beyond the reach of ordinary ministrations. To this duty you are now called: let me entreat you to fulfil it earnestly and liberally, remembering that this cause is the cause not only of our countrymen but of our brethren in the Lord, *whom the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ hath begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead*, but who, in too many cases, are sinking under the dread of that judgment which must *begin at the house of God*, and will press with sternest severity on those who *know their Lord's will but do it not*. Let us not rest till every station has its church and pastor; till every homeless wanderer on arriving in any Christian settlement will know that there at least is some one to check

him in his career of evil, and put him in the way of recovery; till every scattered settler is occasionally visited by a minister of Christ, and ashamed to receive him in a home from which Christ is necessarily absent; till every professing Christian in India is taught and reminded that he is an immortal and responsible being, called by his Heavenly Father *to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.*

SERMON XXVII.

NOWGONG, ASSAM, 1866.

THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN HIS CHURCH.

The former treatise have I made, O Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and teach, until the day in which He was taken up.—Acts i. 1, and part of 2.

You are all familiar, brethren, with the certain fact that the third Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles are works of the same author, and with the high probability that this author was St. Luke, a companion of St. Paul.

This latter fact, indeed, the authorship of Luke, rests on the unanimous belief of the early Church, and the New Testament, to say the very least, contains nothing to contradict it or even to render it improbable. But that the author of the Acts also wrote the third Gospel is undeniable, for the first verse of the Acts, addressed to Theophilus, refers us to *a former treatise,* containing an account of *all that Jesus began both to do and teach,* and on turning to the Gospel, we find that it is a treatise also inscribed to Theophilus, and giving a narrative of Christ's words and works up to the time of the Ascension. Now in briefly mentioning this well-known

connection between the two books, I have no intention of detaining you by a discussion on any historical or literary question connected with Scripture: for such subjects there are other times and opportunities. My purpose rather is to lead your thoughts from an outward to an inward connection, to show that the Gospel and the Acts are united not only by the common authorship of Luke, but by the common presence and agency, so to speak, of Christ. The subject is suggested by the remarkable words of the text, *all that Jesus began both to do and teach, till the day in which He was taken up.* Was not *the day in which He was taken up*, it may be asked, the end of His life and ministry, did He not then return to *the glory which He had with the Father before the world was?* How then can it be said that up to the Ascension He was only beginning *to do and teach?* After His baptism, no doubt, at the marriage-feast of Cana, when He spoke the sermon on the mount, in the desert when He struggled with Satan, He was beginning His deeds of love and His words of wisdom; but when He led His disciples *out as far as Bethany*, and *as He blessed them, was parted from them, and carried up to heaven*, then surely His labours were over, He entered into His rest, He was not beginning, but ending, His works and His doctrine. Such thoughts as these may well strike a superficial reader, and so, as suggesting to him deeper thoughts, may become eminently instructive. The point to which I desire to call your attention has been well put by a modern writer. 'The impressive force of the word *began* will be duly appreciated, as soon as we perceive that it describes the whole course of Christ's earthly labours up to the time of His ascension as ini-

tiatory and preparatory. If, at the commencement of a second book, all that had been narrated in the first is called the initiatory work of Jesus, we have a plain intimation that in the second book we are to look for an account of the further continuance of that work.' *

Let me recall your thoughts, brethren, to the pervading tone of our Lord's discourses to His apostles on the eve of His departure from them. He is constantly impressing upon them that His approaching removal is not really a separation from them, far less a calamity to them, that His union with them is about to be more intimate with them than ever, that His presence will never be withdrawn from them, that His absence in the flesh is necessary and highly beneficial, because, as long as He is moving among them in the body as human friend and guide, He cannot teach and strengthen them by sending His Spirit from heaven. Turn to the later portions of any one of the four Gospels. The last speech of Jesus which St. Matthew records is the comforting assurance, *Lo, I am with you alway, even to the end of the world.* We read in St. Mark that *after the Lord was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God,* He continued to *work with the disciples when they went forth and preached everywhere.* St. Luke tells us that just before the Ascension He renewed His assurance that He would *send the promise of His Father upon them,* and bade them *tarry in the city of Jerusalem, till they should be endued with power from on high.* It is hardly necessary to quote from St. John, for the whole of His last discourse with the apostles just before the betrayal is full of the same promises over and over again repeated: *I will not leave you comfortless. I will come to you:*

* Baumgarten. Ap. *Hist.* i. pp. 10, 11.

because I live, ye shall live also: a little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me, because I go to the Father: it is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you. By these and many like words He assures His faint-hearted followers that though no longer to be seen with the eyes, and heard with the ears, and handled with the hands of men, yet His ministry is not to cease, His love and care for them is not to be relaxed, He is still to be a present Saviour, working among them by a more powerful agency than He had ever yet put forth for their salvation.

The fulfilment of these promises, in other words, the continuance of our Lord's ministry in its new and more spiritual yet not less real form, is one main subject of the Acts and the Epistles. We see at once that the apostles felt and understood this even before the Spirit descended upon them on the day of Pentecost. When they assemble to elect the successor of Judas, they address their Master, now unseen, with no less confidence than when He was visibly present. *Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, show whether of these two* (Barsabas or Matthias) *Thou hast chosen, that he may take part in this ministry and apostleship.* And when the Spirit is at last poured down upon them, they recognise the same loving Master's agency and gift. *This Jesus,* says Peter in his sermon on that great occasion, *being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear.* Afterwards, as the history proceeds, the same agency is everywhere prominent,

occasionally spoken of without distinction from the operations of the Spirit, even as Christ when on earth sometimes said to His disciples *the Comforter will come to you*, sometimes *I will come to you*, as two aspects of the same truth, that very often distinctly and personally referred to the Lord Jesus. The martyr Stephen is accused of teaching that Jesus of Nazareth will return to earth to destroy Jerusalem, and does actually see Him standing in glory at the right hand of God to receive the spirit which in his dying prayer he commends into His hands. The like vision is vouchsafed to St. Paul, not once only but frequently: on the road to Damascus he hears the voice of Jesus from the midst of *the light from heaven above the brightness of the sun*; when he is praying in the temple he falls into a trance, and sees Jesus bidding him depart for the apostleship of the Gentiles; in his prison at Jerusalem the same Lord again stands by him and promises that he shall bear witness to Him at Rome; and twice in the First Epistle to the Corinthians he claims to have seen Jesus Christ our Lord, in language which seems to imply not a mere carnal seeing in the days of His flesh, but some supernatural vision granted for the Apostle's comfort and confirmation in the faith after the resurrection. At Corinth, too, as the head-quarters of the Grecian world, the Lord by a direct communication instructs him to remain, *for*, He says, *I have much people in this city.*

It is needless to enumerate the almost countless instances in which the work of the early Church is directed by the personal agency of the Holy Spirit, who, as we say in our Creed, and infer from the language of St. John's Gospel and the whole course of the history, proceeds not

only from the Father, but also from *the Son*. None will deny that the Spirit's work is Christ's work, and therefore, for simplicity's sake, we have excluded such interventions from our present consideration, and confined ourselves to such as are attributed to Jesus only. And they are amply sufficient to teach us.

Thus, then, we learn that He who at the end of the Gospel was seen to pass into the heavens, had not then ended His ministry, but had only brought the beginning, the first stage of it, to a conclusion; that the apostles did not merely trust for guidance to the recollection of His past teaching, but continued to act under His present direction; that in every moment of perplexity and distress, He was ever ready to encourage and support them by some vision, or angelic messenger, or preternatural inspiration, or even by the sound of the same voice which they had once heard calming the storm on the Galilean lake, or blessing the bread and wine at the parting Supper, or summoning Lazarus to come forth from his four days' burial. And thus, among other inferences, we may deduce from these facts a fresh confirmation to our faith in the Divine authority of the apostolic preaching and doctrine, as contained in the speeches and epistles which are included, with the four biographies of our Lord, in the volume of the Christian Scriptures. For if we are told that in those four biographies we read only of what *Jesus began both to do and teach*, and if we see plain traces of the Lord's directing influence in the acts of His followers, we cannot doubt that the same guidance was also exercised over their teaching. If the Acts and the occasional historical notices found in the Epistles are the continuance of

Christ's deeds, we must admit that the doctrinal statements and practical exhortations of those same Acts and Epistles are the continuance of Christ's words. And so we do not doubt that the voice of Paul or Peter or John speaking to us in the Scriptures is the voice of Jesus, and that when Paul declares himself to be *an apostle, not of men, neither by men, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised Him from the dead*, he not only declares himself to have been called to the ministry by the express command and agency of Christ, but also alleges His authority for all the teaching which he may deliver under His commission, asserting that the teaching, as well as the commission, was derived from the inspiration of the same Saviour. Indeed he more than once chiefly maintains this, assuring the Corinthians that he received from the Lord the history of the institution of the Eucharist, insisting to the Galatians that the Gospel which he preached to them was taught to himself by revelation of Jesus Christ, and pressing upon the Ephesians the fact that by the same revelation was made known to him the mystery of the calling of the Gentiles. And thus we see that the true unity of the New Testament does not depend on questions of human authorship, on the fact that St. Luke wrote two of its books, or that his writings were influenced by St. Paul, and St. Mark's by St. Peter, but on the pervading presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, so that what He *began to do and teach* in its earliest portions, He continued to do and teach in its latest.

We may truly say in its latest, for it is in the last of all the books of Scripture, that He personally reappears in glory, permits the beloved disciple to recognise amidst

the symbols of judgment and almighty power the form once marred and pierced by the cruelty of His enemies, to gaze again upon the well-known countenance now shining *like the sun in his strength*, to listen to the majestic voice now *sounding like many waters*, and even to transcribe seven epistles actually addressed by that voice for the confirmation, rebuke, or warning of seven churches—representing, in their different stages of Christian grace and progress, the churches of all ages and all parts of the world. Nor is the presence of the Lord withdrawn when the last of these epistles has been spoken, and the door is opened in heaven, and the roll of things which must be hereafter is revealed to the Apostle. On the contrary, as the dogmatic statements and moral precepts of the New Testament are full of Christ and rest on His authority, so also are its prophecies: the *Lamb that was slain* is alone found worthy to open the book which contains the issues of the great conflict between good and evil; to Him, as the Saviour who *redeemed men to God by His blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation*, the praise of the heavenly host is continually addressed: and so through the long vision which follows; it is the Lamb who makes war and conquers, in whose Blood His servants wash their robes, in whose book their names are written, from whose wrath kings and nations flee, and out of whose throne flows the river of the water of life. No other book, then, of the New Testament supplies us with a more impressive or convincing illustration of the meaning of the words of the text, *all that Jesus began to do and to teach*. What He began to do and to teach by dying for us on Calvary, He continues to do and to teach till

the consummation of all things, by applying through His Spirit the efficacy of His redeeming sacrifice, not only to the consciousness of every individual believer, but also to every great crisis in the history of His Church.

Brethren, if this is so, if the short period of our Lord's ministry on earth was only the beginning of His doings and teachings, if both are seen to be continued without interruption to the very end of apostolic times, and if their continuance throughout all ages is promised in no ambiguous terms, let no one here doubt that this teaching and guidance will be given to himself, or hesitate diligently and earnestly to seek it. The great promise, *I am with you alway, even to the end of the world,* was not addressed to the apostles only, nor to the Church as a body founded and represented by them, but to every baptized member of it in all time, who humbly claims it for himself, and asks for its fulfilment. Our Lord, we must not question it, comes now as really by His Spirit to summon every faithful Christian, as when He sent His angel to comfort St. Paul in the terrors of the storm which swept over Adria, or as when, by a direct revelation of His will, He *separated Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto He called them.* No doubt, His interference is now withdrawn, so to speak, a step further into the mysterious darkness which hides from our sight the throne of God: as His occasional manifestations and direct promptings in the Acts and Revelation afford a less direct appeal to the senses than His occasional visits to His disciples between the Resurrection and Ascension, and these again than His constant visible presence among them day by day before the Crucifixion, so we of this

age are required yet more continually to walk by faith, rather than by sight, and to believe in Christ's Presence among us, though the age of miracles and supernatural revelations is passed, or at least suspended. Such is a part of God's discipline and education of the world, no less than of the individual: visible helps are gradually withdrawn, and an unseen spiritual power substituted for them. Only let us not doubt the reality of this spiritual power, and that the Lord Jesus, who once walked on earth, is its author. He is still our Friend and Brother; we may be sure of His willingness always to save and help us, and of the Comforter's continued mission from the Father and the Son. In times of perplexity, sorrow, prosperity, sickness, and death, let each offer up from his heart the prayer for mercy and deliverance, and believe that *He who loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood*, will not leave us comfortless, but is ever ready to answer our prayers, and to give us support and guidance according to our need. *As our days, so shall our strength be.*

And perhaps, brethren, this subject, the continued presence of the Lord Jesus with His Church and with each individual believer, is not inappropriate for the residents of a remote station, but rarely visited by a clergyman of their own communion, and enjoying therefore few opportunities of sharing those ordinances which are the appointed means, under ordinary circumstances, of maintaining among them Christian faith, and love, and unity. For they will be reminded that, after all, there is One ever ready to minister to their spiritual wants and necessities, when earthly ministers and earthly helps are withdrawn, and that it is the privilege of every baptized

Christian to approach directly, not through the intervention of any human priest or intercessor, but in the immediate personal communion of prayer and confession of sin, and thankfulness for mercies received, that Heavenly Friend and Saviour who dwelleth not in temples made with hands, but occupies by His Spirit the hearts of believers, and desires to be worshipped, not by the pomp of an august ceremonial, but by the earnest supplications of contrite hearts and the devotion of pure and holy lives. Believe me, brethren, that Christ visits with His help and blessing every Christian who diligently seeks Him, even if he is prevented from approaching Him by liturgy and holy communion and the appointed ministrations of the Church. Doubtless it is right for all, situated as you are, to supply, as far as you can, the lack of such ministrations, and to keep alive the consciousness that you are Christ's people and members of His holy Catholic Church by gathering, if possible, for Sunday worship, and where a household consists of two or three members, daily for family prayer. Yet more necessary is it, I need hardly say, that every individual Christian here present should carefully continue his own private religious habits, the practice of secret prayer, morning and evening, the devotional and thoughtful study of God's word. Above all, to maintain in the heart a constant sense of Christ's presence, to abstain from doing or saying what is displeasing to Him because you believe that He still lives as the active Ruler and King of His Church; in a word, to walk by faith and not by sight is one sure means, under His blessing, of keeping hold of Him and obeying Him in spite of solitude and separation from friends and means of grace,

and the absence of many helps to godliness which in other days you enjoyed. And with the same object in view—to remind you that you are not in truth a solitary and separate community, but members of the universal body of Christ, I have thought it better to ask you to contribute to-day, not to any local object concerning the welfare of this station only—and therefore only speaking to you of isolation and estrangement from the wider interests of Christ's Church—but to a general one in which all our fellow Christians and fellow countrymen in India are directly and closely concerned. And yet though general, it is one with which my hearers ought specially to sympathise; for I have undertaken to plead for a Society which desires to supply to the scattered European population of India the very helps of which I have been speaking to you, to disperse in its remoter stations clergy who shall carry with them the preaching of the Word, the sacraments, and other means of grace; to visit and console the sick, the sorrowful, the desponding, those perishing for lack of knowledge, or from the bondage of evil habits, or from some other of the many troubles and temptations attending a solitary and neglected life. Doubt not, brethren, that Christ's blessing rests on those who aid such an effort, if it is planned and carried out in dependence upon Him; doubt not that as He began to do and to teach when He was visibly present upon earth in the days of His flesh, so He will continue now to do and teach among ourselves, to do great works for all who come to Him in faith and prayer, to teach all who seek His knowledge and desire to enjoy His love. You are asked to further a cause with which Christ's doing and teaching are closely connected, a cause not local or

partial or intended to benefit particular places or persons, but designed as a part of the general organisation of the Church in this land; a cause, therefore, in which every Christian in it should take an active interest, and by promoting which in a hearty, liberal, prayerful spirit, he will maintain and strengthen his own connection with his unseen but ever present Lord.

SERMON XXVIII.

CALCUTTA CATHEDRAL, 1866.

SILENT INFLUENCE.

And it came to pass, that as Jesus was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, one of His disciples said unto Him, Lord, teach us to pray.—Luke xi. 1.

When by the blessing of God a man is roused to a sense of his own sinfulness, when conscience becomes not an occasional but a habitual monitor, and when the thought of God's mercy in Christ is realized by any one as a motive of action, nothing is more common than for him to feel a growing anxiety to do some definite good in the world, to impart to others the glad tidings which have stirred the depths of his own heart, and to guide them into those paths of righteousness in which he himself finds peace. The practical manifestation of this anxiety varies with the individual character; some men feel themselves especially fitted, some of a more timid and shrinking disposition are naturally disinclined, to help and advise those around them. There are amongst us Marys as well as Marthas, those who are content to remain always learners no less than those who feel called to be teachers, the self-distrusting disciples

who desire constantly *to sit at Jesus' feet and hear His word* as well as the zealous followers who are *cumbered with much serving*. In itself no doubt the desire thus to serve those around us is not only purely good, but a necessary consequence and sign of the power of the Spirit in our own hearts. For he who has received an inestimable blessing must wish that others should share it; the constant test by which the Saviour gauges the reality of our love to Himself is our love to the brethren. His parting command to His disciples was to *go and teach all nations*; the institution of His Church involves as a fundamental part of its conception the truth that we are all united together by sympathy and mutual help. The point, then, which I desire to consider is not whether we are bound to serve others, but how we can best serve them; what dangers are to be avoided, and what principles observed in our efforts to serve them. Clearly this end will not always be most readily compassed by the restless desire of definite exertion. In the comparison between the two sisters of Bethany to whom we have just referred, our Lord says that Mary had *chosen the better part, which should not be taken away from her*. A blessing often attends the unconscious influence of a holy character which is denied to eager forwardness and bustling activity. Even a heathen moralist could say that if it were possible for Virtue to render herself visible to the eyes of men, the mere sight of her would produce on their minds and hearts a marvellous effect. No book within our own experience and memory has wrought a deeper impression on the Church, and stirred up more devout aspirations and efforts after Christian holiness, than an unpretending volume of poetry bearing

as its motto the prophetic words, *In quietness and confidence shall be your strength*, and put forth, without the slightest expectation of the effect which was to follow, by a meek servant of Christ who has lived and died as the occupant of an English country parsonage. It is not so much what we do as what we are, not the excited and eager search after usefulness as the silent effect of a pure and gentle life, which really wins souls to Christ and persuades men to live according to His teaching. It was with the intention of illustrating this truth that I chose as the subject of this sermon the incident related in the text. It is not my purpose to speak to you of the power and duty of prayer, though prayer is the foundation of a religious life; nor of the marvellous fact that the Son of God was continually occupied in it, though there is no more comforting proof than this of His perfect humanity; nor again of the prayer which He has taught us in compliance with His disciple's request, though no prayer can be good and acceptable to God if it wanders from the spirit of the Lord's Prayer. Any one of these subjects might furnish us with abundant and profitable matter for thought, but I desire to consider the text, not in a special but in a general application; not in reference to the particular lesson which our Lord taught his disciple, but to the fact that He taught him not by word of mouth but by the mere sight of His occupation; not, so to speak, deliberately and of premeditated purpose, but unconsciously, by simply observing a practice which was habitual to Him. A disciple, we read, saw His Lord praying and asked to be taught. It was not, you observe, by a lengthy homily on the duty of prayer, by a rebuke to those who

had never turned their thoughts to so great a subject, by a laboured exposition of its advantages and results, that Christ found the opportunity of exhorting His disciples to approach God as their Father who is in heaven. He prayed because it was His custom to pray, and we know that on one occasion He spent a whole night in prayer, and doubtless, His countenance, His manner, His attitude, showed that He was engaged in an absorbing occupation, which was to Him of the deepest significance, and which He regarded as a needful preparation for the work which He had to do. The sight of this devotion roused the attention of a disciple, and excited in his mind the desire of understanding and sharing a privilege from which Jesus seemed to derive a heavenly comfort and power. The incident, then, furnishes an example of unconscious influence, of the effect produced upon others by the daily current of a man's life, of the secret force by which, wholly unknown to himself, his unpremeditated words and actions, sometimes even his look and manner, are continually inclining those who observe his ways either to good or evil. You will not, brethren, be slow to perceive the vast importance of these unconscious involuntary influences. They are, in truth, of greater moment than our designed efforts to produce any effect on the character and conduct of another; such designed efforts being the result of intention are only occasional and are often even unnatural to us, they frequently fail, they may give a false impression of our character, they may be so awkward in their execution as to betray the defect of their origin; but our unconscious influence is the outward expression of the inner man, operating at every moment,

necessarily true, and certainly always producing, without any thought or effort of ours, some result either beneficial or injurious.

It is easy to illustrate what I mean both from Scripture and ordinary life. No man was ever so incessantly employed in the work of doing good as the apostle Paul. No man ever exercised so mighty a power over his own and every following generation. No man so thoroughly combined the two kinds of influence, conscious and unconscious, of which I have been speaking —continually framing deliberate schemes for journeyings, preaching and almsgiving, governing churches, and exhorting individuals, and at the same time living always as in the very presence of Christ, loving Him, thinking of Him, showing in all his deeds and words the effect of the overpowering change which His Spirit had wrought in his heart. Now I doubt whether we, the readers of his epistles, are not more influenced for good by those passages which express almost unconsciously, as it were, his habitual feelings, than by his theological discussions or his direct exhortations that we should be reconciled to God, and present our *bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to Him.* You will not think for a moment that I am undervaluing these divine exhortations—may God open our hearts to attend to them, and to live according to their teaching; but I doubt whether they are the passages which most habitually abide with us, and rise to a man's recollection in his best moments, when he desires spiritual strength and consolation either for himself or another. Probably no single word of St. Paul's has been more frequently quoted, and has imparted truer comfort in the hour of weakness, than one

which is not an exhortation at all, but a mere casual expression of his own habitual feeling, *To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.* None, again, can have sent more wearied wayfarers rejoicing on their way than the simple statement of his experience when he was recovering from some great sickness or trouble: *Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal.* So, again, his confession that he had *a thorn in the flesh,* that he vainly *besought the Lord that it might depart from him,* but received instead the assurance that divine *grace was sufficient for him,* pours a perfect flood of spiritual light on the nature of prayer, the meaning of Christ's promise that it should be always heard and answered, and the healing medicine to be extracted from the bitter root of chastisement. The Apostle's most elaborate reasonings on the doctrine of justification, his most spiritual applications of Jewish history to Christian teaching, his most indignant denunciations of those who pervert the Gospel of Christ, certainly cannot have produced so wide, probably not so deep, an impression on men's hearts and lives as these involuntary displays of his own devotion and struggles and Christian experiences—these simple touches which are (to divert his words from their primary application) *an epistle of Christ* ministered to us by him, *written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God—not in tables of stone,* like the stern commands to fear God and

to flee from evil, *but in fleshy tables of the heart,* being the unconscious unveiling of those inner motives and constraining principles which formed the glory and happiness of his life; and which would, if we too could adopt them and act upon them, form the glory and happiness of ours.

Nor again is the case different if we pass from the records of Scripture to the daily experience of ordinary modern life. A father who desires to train up his children and order his household in the fear of God, effects his blessed purpose far less by exhortation and rebuke than by the constant but unconscious exhibition of his own character and conduct, as guided and sanctified by that holy fear. There is perhaps no more beautiful relation in life than that of brother and sister; nowhere else is the purifying influence of a tender woman more often happily and successfully exercised over a self-willed and wayward man. Yet certainly a sister does not preserve a brother from evil ways and evil companions by perpetual advice and remonstrance; it is the sight of her unselfish gentleness, the unintentional influence of self-forgetting devotion, which leads him to confess to her his difficulties, to seek her counsel in his troubles, to abstain from words and deeds which would pollute the atmosphere which surrounds her. And so in less close and confidential relations, while it is possible so to abuse any opportunities which we may have for influencing others by want of tact and consideration as to incur just reproach for impertinent intrusion, it is quite certain that a life of consistent godliness is a perpetual, though silent, testimony to the truth and power of Christ's Gospel which will at least incline men

to walk in those paths which are thus shown to be pleasantness and peace.

Brethren, this subject of unconscious influence may by God's blessing be an encouragement to many, and certainly ought to be a warning to all. Let us briefly consider it in these two aspects, and so conclude.

First, there are perhaps some among us who may derive from it a needed encouragement. What a useless life I am leading, how little good I am able to do in the world, how completely my time is occupied by secular business; such are the not unfrequent thoughts and regrets of many a Christian man and woman who, having tasted that the Lord is gracious, is anxious in some way to help that holy cause of man's salvation for which He shed His blood upon the cross. I believe that such persons may generally find some useful work to interest them in their scanty leisure, but, perhaps even if they do, they may still be oppressed with the feeling that this is but a sorry offering to present to Christ who for them offered up Himself. But let such a one not be discouraged. He need not doubt that if he is really and earnestly devoted to the task of conforming his erring and wayward will to Christ's most holy will in all things, if he is seeking to leaven his own character by the influence of Christ's Spirit, and to live in communion with God through humble and faithful prayer, he will become, to quote once more the Apostle's words now in their original application, *an epistle of Christ known and read of all men*, a living witness persuading them to be saved. The sight of a life pervaded by such a higher spirit, showing itself by a strict conscientiousness in fulfilling every earthly obligation, a power of

self-restraint controlling the will, the temper, and the tongue, a ready charity, spotless integrity, humble piety, and constant trust in God, furnish an evidence to the fulfilment of Christ's promises not to be mistaken, a sermon preaching to all men the truth, as it is in Jesus; compared with which all the pulpit rhetoric which was ever declaimed, and all the private admonitions which were ever forced upon reluctant hearers, are but as the passing wind.

But if there are some among us who may derive encouragement from observing the effect produced by the sight of our Lord praying, it is yet more certain that the subject is fraught with abundant warning to us all. If unconscious influence may be exerted for good, assuredly it may be, and often is, exerted for evil. The sight of selfishness, of outbursts of temper, of illiberality, of the neglect of God's Word and house and ordinances, all these things are an epistle not of Christ but of Christ's Enemy, a sermon not preaching the Gospel of peace but encouraging all beholders in their evil ways and evil inclinations. I often think that we in India, Christians constantly surrounded by heathen, are by no means sufficiently careful as to the unconscious influence which we must be exercising every day of our lives on our servants, and the other natives of the country with whom we are brought into constant and often familiar contact. If they see us give way to unreasonable anger and passion, if they observe that we never pray either privately or with our families, or that in any other respects our daily life is unhallowed by any purifying influence, they can have no reason to believe that Christ's Word is a reality, that the religion which we profess

has more life and power in it than their own superstitions. And then again, my brethren, let us take to ourselves this other warning: such a fashioning of the character as to make it a living testimony to Christ, is no easy task. The subject before us and the great example of it in the text remind us of an influence which is habitual, unintentional, unconscious; so that the devotion of our hearts to Christ, and the sanctification of our lives by His Spirit, must be very thorough and complete if we are thus to attract others to godliness by the mere exhibition of its power. By the very nature of the case all self-consciousness, all conceit, everything unreal and unnatural is excluded; 'as the vital processes within us, the beating of our hearts, the drawing of our breath, goes on, when we are in health, without any thought or observation of ours, so must our moral and spiritual lives be taken hold of by Christ's Spirit with such pervading power, that their action is unnoticed by ourselves.'* Let us pray to God, brethren, so to mould our thoughts and words and deeds according to His will, that we may be continually rendering to Him this unconscious service, and proving by our lives the efficacy of His grace.

But, brethren, in order that this unconscious influence may be exercised, it is absolutely necessary that professing Christians should from their earliest years be so trained that the thought of their duty to God and love to His Son Jesus Christ should be habitual to them. It is therefore not by a sudden and arbitrary leap but by a natural transition that I pass from the general

* Dr. Arnold.

subject of my sermon to the particular cause for which your contributions are to-day solicited. You are asked to join with the rest of the Presidency in a comprehensive scheme, for providing the blessing of a sound Christian education for the children of the large and increasing number of Europeans, who are flocking into India for the construction of railways, the development of trade, and of various agricultural and commercial enterprises of which perhaps the most important is carried on immediately around us here. We desire to establish and permanently endow in the bracing climate of the Himalayas three institutions, in which our fellow-countrymen and fellow-Christians in India, who are not sufficiently prosperous to send their children home for education, may place them, in the confidence that they will be there trained under such Christian influence, that they in their turn when they come to mix with men will exercise the same happy influence upon those around them. My brethren, in the midst of all the rivalries and struggles and ambition and money-making of this restless world there is only one element which is altogether excellent, and which the more it spreads and exercises its power among men, the more it makes this world a happy and holy place. This element is the Gospel of Christ, the pure and blessed teaching of the Spirit of God. To develop this element among men, to widen and deepen this teaching, to bring children up in it, to help them to open their hearts to it, is in the strictest accordance with the example of Him who taught His disciples to pray, and went about doing good, and by giving up His life for us redeemed the world. Let me urge you to bear a willing and hearty part in this work and to show

it by the munificence of your contributions to-day. Let us hope that many children of English blood may be trained, by God's blessing on the liberality of our generation, to love and serve that Saviour who is the source of all good.

SERMON XXIX.

CHERRA POONJEE, KOSSYAH HILLS, 1866.

FAITH WITHOUT SIGHT.

Whom having not seen ye love.—1 Peter i. 8.

THESE few words may be said to contain the very essence of Christianity. They express two of its most distinctive features. They set before us a Person as the object of our religious devotion, and they tell us that in loving Him we must walk by faith and not by sight, and seek for our safety and happiness in believing though we have not seen. Other religions rest on a system of doctrine, a code of morals, a book, a series of traditions, or an organised society. No doubt Christianity has all these, but no one of them, not even the Book in which God's Revelations are recorded, can be called the foundation and basis of the system: other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Round His life every Christian doctrine centres, on His teaching or character every precept rests; the main object of the Bible is to tell us of Him, such unwritten ordinances or institutions as have been handed down from primitive times are all intended to connect us with Him; the Christian Church depends

upon Him for its whole life and activity, as the limbs of the body upon the head, the branches of the vine upon the parent stem; for without Him, or rather apart from Him, we can do nothing. It is most important for us thoroughly to lay to heart this peculiarity of the Gospel. To be a Christian is to be a member of Christ. To believe in Christianity is to believe in Christ, not merely to accept this or that doctrine, to recite this or that confession of faith, but to be attached by a living bond of union to Christ as a Person. This peculiarity has coloured the whole language of Scripture. Some of its phrases are absolutely unintelligible unless we perceive this. Every employment, duty, relaxation, and undertaking is to be carried on in the consciousness of His presence, and with a real living sense of dependence upon Him: and this is called doing our various works *in Him*. Thus Christian children are to obey their parents in the Lord, the joy of Christian men is to be in the Lord, Christian marriage is to be contracted only in the Lord, Christian entreaty and exhortation are given in the Lord Jesus, Christians are sanctified in Christ Jesus, are *created in Christ Jesus, unto good works*, and whatsoever they do in word or deed is to be done in Him or in His name. In any other religion, not formed on the principle of a direct living and communion with a Person, we should be told to obey, to enter upon business, to enjoy ourselves, to conduct our ordinary life and conversation according to its founder's precepts, we should be entreated and exhorted by him or in remembrance of him, we should be sanctified through his teaching, we should be urged to perform good works by his help or in

dependence on his example. But the Gospel is not content with such cold, superficial, merely external appeals: God who is its Author knew that sluggish human nature must be roused into life and activity by some deeper and stronger and more pervading influence than this; having Himself fashioned that nature, He felt that its reformation must be effected not solely or principally through the understanding, the conscience, or the moral sentiments, but through the emotions, the affections, and the heart. He resolved to attract that nature to Himself *with cords of a man, with bands of love*, to work upon our human feelings as well as our mental powers; not only to reveal to us a system which should satisfy our reason, but a Person, an actual Son of man, born of a woman, who should enlist on the side of holiness our sympathy and our love. It is true that this Divine Person who was thus to attract mankind to Himself could be actually seen by very few of His disciples, He was known only to one generation of men, dwelling in one of the smallest provinces of that earth which He was to claim as His inheritance. Yet it was divinely ordered that the record of His life and death should be so complete, the testimony of eye-witnesses so clear, His deeds and words of such genuine human interest, the whole exhibition of His character and teaching so attractive, the influence of His Spirit so powerful, that faith should lay hold of Him when sight could no longer compass Him, and that the effect of hearing and reading and thinking about Him, long after He had returned to the right hand of His Father, should be no less mighty to convert and sanctify the soul than the actual sight of Him when He was on earth. Viewed thus in connection

with God's plan for our salvation, the short half verse which I read as my text is invested with an absolutely overwhelming interest. Consider who wrote it. The author is Simon Peter, the apostle who with one exception, if indeed with one, was most intimately connected with our Lord, and most dearly loved Him. Peter, whose character is presented to us with more vivid touches than those which depict any other member of the group which gathered round Jesus of Nazareth; Peter, the ardent, impulsive disciple who was called from his nets to catch men, who first shrank from the Lord as from one too pure for contact with a sinful man, but afterwards exultingly declared that there was no other to whom we can go, for He alone has the words of eternal life; Peter, who first proclaimed that Jesus was the Son of the living God; Peter, who was chosen to witness the most secret acts of that blessed life, the raising of the dead child, the Transfiguration and the Agony; Peter, who thrice denied Him and then confessed his love for Him, and was thrice bidden to be the Shepherd of His sheep and of His lambs; he it is who here reminds the Church of this all-powerful principle, *whom having not seen ye love.* There is a reality, a genuineness, a depth of meaning in the words as uttered by him which we only learn to appreciate as we meditate upon them more and more deeply. They form the transition, as it were, between the ages which had been permitted to see and the ages which are required and aided to believe without seeing. Peter had seen and loved: he had personally experienced the full beauty of that Divine character. He had listened to the tender remonstrances of that Voice, checking his presumption or pardoning

his sin; he had heard also its sterner accents, when he was rebuked for interposing his hasty and thoughtless wishes in the way of God's designs; he has recorded his own impressions of that life and death in the information which, according to a trustworthy tradition supported by much internal probability, he communicated to the Evangelist St. Mark; he was led by actual sight and hearing to the love of his adorable Master, and he expected that the generations which were to follow him, would be led to the same love not by sight but by faith.

Brethren, we may find it a hard thing to carry out this expectation which the apostle Peter has expressed for us in the text. We may complain that the foundation of our religion seems receding more and more into the dim past; that ages have elapsed since Jesus Christ was born, and lived and died, and that therefore it is hard to regard even Him with a personal love. Or, more reasonably, we may lament that the world and our own selfishness and the love of money and pleasure, and a thousand other evil influences, arising from within and without, turn us away from the contemplation of His perfection, or that the things which are seen obscure and block out the things which are not seen. No doubt these difficulties are real; faith in an unseen Saviour, is not altogether easy, especially when the chief reason for which we are to believe in Him, and to love Him is that in His life and character He manifests to the world that absolute ideal holiness which furnishes a perpetual rebuke to our sin and folly. Yet that this personal love and devotion to Christ may be attained is certain, for it has furnished a foundation to the whole life and conduct

of numbers of Christians in all ages and countries of Christendom, and belonging to all classes and conditions of men. It is interesting to descend the stream of Christian history, and observe the absolute identity of language on this subject held by persons who in all external circumstances were wholly dissimilar. Let us begin with the New Testament itself. The Apostle Paul had enjoyed no opportunity, like his colleague Peter, of knowing and loving the Lord Jesus when in the flesh; if He had ever crossed his path at all, he could only have gazed upon Him with the scorn of a persecuting Pharisee. Yet listen to his language about Him, notice the personal feeling of affection which he had contracted towards Him. *I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better; nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you.* Let us pass on to the next century and take as an example of this personal devotion to Christ, the words of a Greek Bishop named Polycarp, who is known to have been a disciple of the Apostle John, and from that inspired teacher of love had learned to love Jesus Christ. He was offered by the heathen magistrate the alternative of martyrdom or of renouncing his Saviour. This was his answer, 'Eighty and six years,' he said, 'have I served Christ and He has done me nothing but good, how then could I curse Him, my Lord and my Saviour?' Let us hasten over a wide expanse both of ages and continents, from the martyrdom of an Asiatic Greek in the second century to the cell of an Irish monk in the seventh. Some of you may have read of the missionary labours of Columban: hear now the prayer in which he prepared himself for them. 'Lord Jesus, give Thy light

to my lamp, that in its light the most holy place may be revealed to me in which Thou dwellest as the Eternal High Priest, that I may always desire Thee, look upon Thee in love, and long after Thee. It belongs to Thee to show Thyself to us, Thy suppliants, O Saviour full of love, that we may know Thee, love Thee alone, think of Thee alone day and night that Thy love may fill our souls, and that this love, so great, may never more be quenched by the many waters of this earth; as it is written, *Many waters cannot quench love.*' Yet six hundred years later we find an Italian friar called St. Francis, so absorbed in the love of Christ that his credulous disciples believed that his hands miraculously received the marks of the Crucifixion, and historians who are not credulous, unite in testifying that through contemplation of His character he was morally and spiritually changed into His likeness, and displayed such an amount of gentleness, such a tender and compassionate spirit, as seldom tempered the fiery zeal of that age of fierce enthusiasm. We approach the time of the Reformation, and find that when John Huss was bound to the stake at Constance, he strengthened himself for the coming agony by the remark, 'My Lord Jesus Christ was bound with a harder chain than this, for my sake, why then should I be ashamed of this rusty fetter for His sake?'

We pass on two hundred years, and find in the 'Pilgrim's Progress' this description of the feelings of a Christian at the approach of death. 'I see myself now at the end of my journey, my toilsome days are ended. I am going to see that Head which was crowned with thorns and that Face which was spit

upon for me. I have formerly lived by hearsay and by faith, but now I go where I shall live by sight, and shall be with Him in whose company I delight myself. I have loved to hear my Lord spoken of and wherever I have seen the print of His shoe on the earth there I have coveted to set my foot too. His name has been sweeter to me than all perfumes. His voice to me has been most sweet, and His countenance I have more desired than they who have most desired the light of the sun. His words I did use to gather for my food and for antidotes against faintings. He has held me and has kept me from mine iniquities, yea my steps have been strengthened in His ways.' Nor can it be alleged that this personal devotion to an unseen Saviour has only been realised by men or women devoted to a contemplative life or missionary calling or a strictly religious profession, or again that they are all selected from ages proverbially called of faith, with which we in this busy, enquiring, and scientific nineteenth century can have but little sympathy. It has been said of Arnold who, though a Christian minister, was yet from the circumstances of his life and occupation, necessarily much mixed up with society and politics, that it is essential for a right understanding not only of his religious opinions but of his whole character, to enter into the peculiar feeling of love and adoration, which he entertained towards our Lord Jesus Christ as a living Friend and Master. 'In that unknown world in which our thoughts become instantly lost, it was his support to remember that there is still one object on which our thoughts and imaginations may fasten no less than our affections, that amidst the light, dark from excess of brilliance

which surrounds the throne of God, we may yet discern the gracious form of the Son of Man.' Now in all the instances which I have cited, brethren, the point which I desire you to notice is not that these persons were good men, not that they believed in Christianity as a revelation from God, and tried to follow its precepts, but that they realised the words of the text, *whom having not seen ye love*, and felt towards the Lord Jesus Christ as to a personal friend, living for them at His Father's right hand in heaven, sending them divine help and comfort while they remained on earth, and ready to receive them to Himself that they might see Him face to face when their struggles should be ended. In this great feature of the Christian life, this peculiar characteristic of the Gospel, the Eastern bishop of the second century, the Irish monk of the seventh, the Italian devotee of the thirteenth, the Bohemian reformer of the fifteenth, the non-conformist mechanic of the seventeenth, and the Oxford professor of the nineteenth, together with thousands of others who might have been added to our brief muster-roll, held convictions absolutely identical. And in the strength of such convictions it was intended that in all ages and all countries, in Palestine in the 1st century, in England and India now, and hereafter to the end of time, 'the holy Church throughout all the world' should acknowledge its Lord.

Such, brethren, is Christianity, or at least a practical application to our daily life of its fundamental doctrine, the Incarnation of Christ. It is an application different perhaps from that easy-going, careless view with which men commonly regard it, the listless half attention which they pay to the Gospel history, and the insigni-

ficant influence which it exercises on their hearts even if they do not profess themselves utterly uncertain whether it is really true or not. Let me try to complete the subject by enumerating some of the effects which this regard to Christ, as a living personal Friend, should exercise on different parts of our life and conduct.

I. It should strengthen us in the difficulties and anxieties of life. We need such strength: we need the help of a living personal Friend: we need a sympathy which is at once human and divine, human in its tenderness, divine in its purity. Above all, the thought of such a Friend should support us when we have yielded to temptation, and are struggling back again through penitence and doubt to the light of God's countenance. Then we are revived and encouraged by the belief that *though we have sinned, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous and He is the Propitiation for our sins;* then we remember that *He bare our sins in His own body on the tree, and that by His stripes we are healed.* There is life and recovery in the thought; for if we truly and heartily accept it, we may be sure that *neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*

II. Next, if the thought of Christ's love should help us in the struggle of life, not less powerful is its aid in the inevitable struggle of death. Brethren, that struggle must come: the anticipation of it is perhaps unwelcome, but we ought sometimes to bring it home to our hearts, seeing that it is the only event in our lives to which we

can look forward with absolute certainty. And how can we be supported in our passage through the dark valley, unless a living all-powerful Friend be with us to guide us by the same staff which supported Himself when He trod it before us. In that hour we shall need some real practical sympathy, a help which though divine yet can condescend to our weakness; we can only be *made more than conquerors through Him who loved us*, and Whom we in our hours of strength and activity have also learned to love.

III. Lastly, we specially need the love of Christ in that time of perplexity which combines to some extent the trials both of life and death, when friends are taken away from us. Then there is no comfort except in the belief that they have gone before us to take their place in the many mansions of our Father's house, to which in His own good time He will also safely bring ourselves. When we grieve to think that any one has passed away from the tender gaze of wife or child or brother or friend or father, it is more than a consolation to reflect that those looks of love are now replaced by the sight of that Head which was crowned with thorns, and that Face which was mocked and insulted for our sake. *Whoever doeth the will of God, the same is Christ's brother, and sister, and mother.* To those whom He calls to Himself, He will far more than replace every human tie out of the precious stores of His own boundless love, and we who are left behind must learn, as those whom we have seen are taken from us with increasing frequency, to trust more entirely to Him whom we have not seen.

But that we may have His help when we so deeply

need it, we must rise above that formal unrealising spirit with which we read and hear of His birth and death and teaching, of His perfect holiness and His boundless love. His life should be to us as it were a part of ourselves. Not in the dull uninterested attitude, with which we listen to mere words of custom, but in the contrite and humble spirit in which we seek to satisfy our deepest needs, we should pray Him, by the mystery of His holy Incarnation, by His agony, by His precious death and burial, by His glorious Resurrection and Ascension—to be with us and to help us in all time of our tribulation, in all time of our wealth, in the hour of death and in the day of judgment. This, brethren, is what we want and what He offers: may God so touch our hearts by His Spirit that before it is too late we may accept so rich a treasure of love and blessing.

SERMON XXX.

CHERRA POONJEE, KOSSYAH HILLS, 1866.

THE VISION OF THE DRY BONES.

And he said unto me, Son of man, can these bones live? And I answered, O Lord, thou knowest.—Ezek. xxxvii. 3.

THE book of the prophet Ezekiel presents one feature of especial interest and importance. Alone of the four greater prophets, as they are called, he is the author of one continuous book arranged in uninterrupted chronological order. The writings of Isaiah, Jeremiah and Daniel (as well as several of the minor prophets) consist of scattered fragments, addresses, lyrical outpourings, historical narratives, originally detached from each other and now collected into books and arranged in an order which it is not always easy to trace. Many of them it is probable did not themselves write down their prophecies at all: they uttered them as occasion demanded, and some faithful attendant or scribe, such as Baruch the companion of Jeremiah, recorded them for the permanent edification of the Church. But Ezekiel's prophecies constitute a real book, he is strictly a writer, as well as a poet and a seer. Hence there is no Prophet whose meaning can be less readily understood without continuous study, none who suffers more from the division

of his book into chapters, from mere desultory unsystematic reading, from the habit of quoting a text without attention to what has preceded and followed it, from inattention or indifference to the human element in his writings, that is, to his own circumstances and history.

He was, as you probably remember, a Jewish priest living in exile on the banks of the river Chebar, apparently one of the branches of the Euphrates in the neighbourhood of Babylon. There he was surrounded by a colony of his countrymen, who dated their migration from the captivity of Jehoiachin. The deportation of that prince and his mother into Chaldæa, with a large number of nobles, priests, soldiers, and artificers did not however involve the formal abolition of the Jewish monarchy; the Holy City and Temple were still standing; and the torch of David's house was not extinguished, for Zedekiah the youngest son of Jonah and uncle of Jehoiachin, was advanced to the throne of Jerusalem in the place of his nephew. But it was hardly in the nature of things that such a fragment should be long preserved: the nominal king soon displeased his Babylonian master, and an immense army was once more poured into Judæa. As soon as this news reaches Ezekiel, he begins a long series of lamentations over the approaching fate of his country and over the sins which have drawn down upon it the just and terrible anger of God. Louder and louder wax his denunciations, clearer and clearer the signs and parables which prefigure the coming destruction, as from time to time reports of the progress of the invasion agitate the minds of the anxious exiles. Then for a whole year, during which Jerusalem itself is invested, he remains speechless, till at last a

fugitive from Judah rushes into his presence with the tidings that *the city is smitten*, the kingdom of David overthrown. But then suddenly, when the worst is over, the tone of the prophet changes, his language becomes more cheerful, hopes of the restoration of Israel are substituted for the gloomy anticipation of its ruin, and visions of a more glorious future break through the darkness of the present, *the hand of the Lord was upon the prophet, and carried him out in the spirit of the Lord, and set him down in the midst of the valley which was full of dry bones.* In the wide plain of Chaldæa he beheld the sight familiar to travellers through Eastern deserts, of skeletons of men and beasts bleaching on the sand, the remnants doubtless of some former caravan who had been overwhelmed by a dust storm, or who had fainted on the way through fatigue and thirst. And the Lord said unto him, *Son of man, can these bones live? and he answered, O Lord God, Thou knowest.* Again the Lord said unto him, *Prophesy upon these bones, and say unto them, O ye dry bones, hear ye the word of the Lord. Thus saith the Lord God unto these bones, Behold, I will cause breath to enter into you, and ye shall live: and I will lay sinews upon you, and cover you with skin, and put breath in you, and ye shall live; and ye shall know that I am the Lord.* Ezekiel did as he was commanded, and as he prophesied there was a noise, *and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone: and the sinews and the flesh came up upon them, and the skin covered them above, but there was no breath in them.* Once more he was commanded to prophesy, and once more he obeyed, and *a blast came from the four winds, and breathed upon them, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood*

upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Then came the explanation of the vision. The bones were the house of Israel, then lying cut off with ruined hopes, and the revival was a pledge that God would yet put His Spirit within them, and that they should live, and return to their own land, *and know that the Lord hath spoken it and performed it,* that the grave of the captivity would be opened, and the dry bones of Judaism be clothed with living flesh, and arise from the sepulchre, and put forth powers hitherto unknown. Doubtless the first fulfilment of this acted parable was brought about by Ezra and Nehemiah, and prepared the way for a yet nobler fulfilment, when Christianity burst from the tomb of the old religion, and sent forth an exceeding great army to regenerate the world. But incidentally this revival of the dry bones in the desert of Chaldæa is the type and pledge of all revivals whether of nations, or of individual souls; and the prophecy is full of divine comfort to us in surveying the progress of mankind, in carrying on our personal struggles with sin, and in looking forward to the life beyond the grave, *when this corruption shall put on incorruption, and this mortal shall put on immortality.* Let us briefly consider in these three aspects the consolations and encouragements of the Vision.

I. First then we may take Ezekiel's vision as a pledge that God does not abandon a good cause, however dark may appear its prospects at any particular time. The marvellous scene here displayed before the eyes of one prophet teaches the same lesson as do the comforting words spoken in the ears of another. *The vision is yet for an appointed time, said Habakkuk, but at the end it shall*

speak and not lie, though it tarry wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry. Behold his soul which is lifted up (i.e. which is restless and dissatisfied) *is not upright in him, but the just shall live by his faith.* There are in the world evils so great, that we are tempted to think their cure hopeless. Some men are interested in benevolent objects so hard of attainment that they may feel disposed to abandon them in despair. Others find in this difficulty an excuse for indifference to endeavours which they profess to admire as well-intended, but which they deride as Utopian. There are races and classes so degraded that they have been judged incapable of elevation or improvement. We sometimes read in the English newspapers accounts of the state of the London poor, descriptions of nights spent in workhouses, or of investigations into the courts and alleys of the city, which tempt us to echo with doubt and even incredulity the question of the text, *Can these bones live?* Missionaries in this country are sometimes disheartened by the assertion that the conversion of India to the faith of Christ is impossible. Let all such faithless distrust of God's power and love be removed by the universal lesson which the Prophet learned for himself, and has taught us, in the valley of death. *Can these bones live? O Lord God, Thou knowest.* God knows when and how the difficulties which beset holy enterprises will be cleared away. No condition could appear more hopeless, no ruin more complete, than the desolation of Israel as typified by the skeletons of the scattered caravan. Yet we know as a plain historical fact that, in about half a century from the time when Ezekiel received the assurance of restoration, there went forth

from Cyrus, king of Persia, the august decree *The Lord God of heaven hath given me all the kingdoms of the earth, and He hath charged me to build Him an house at Jerusalem which is in Judah.* The word was spoken, and in due time a latter house arose on Mount Zion with *a glory greater than the former*, for from the latter house proceeded the word of life which has brought salvation to the world. Whatever be the discouragements which surround any task which we have undertaken, let us not doubt that—if we are carrying it on for God's glory and not for our own, if we are acting thoughtfully and diligently, with our ears open to receive the counsels of wisdom and experience—we may work on in the faith that Christ's blessing is upon our labours; for it is not His will that any should perish. The Maker of mankind does *not despise the work of His own hand*, the day will come in His own good time when there will be a shaking, and *the bones will come together*, and a breath will pass into the lifeless forms, *and they will live and stand upon their feet, and know that the Lord hath spoken it and performed it.*

II. Still more deep and impressive should be the comfort derived from this prophetic vision, when we apply it not to any outward or professional work in which we are engaged, but to the personal work of bringing over our hearts and lives into conformity with Christ's will. When we look within ourselves, and consider our own state before God (as in this season of Lent we are especially intended to do), we may well repeat the question, Can these bones live? If we ever think seriously at all, on any higher and deeper subjects than our earthly prosperity and comfort, we must lament the

cold worldliness which freezes up our better aspirations, our bondage to the present, our want of faith in God, and in the principles and rule of life to which He has promised His blessing.

We cannot but contrast the kind of happiness which we most deeply value with the characters and aims and objects which our Lord commended to His disciples in the first proclamation of His kingdom upon earth. *Blessed are the poor in spirit, the mourner for sin, the meek, they which hunger and thirst after righteousness, the merciful, the pure in heart, the peace makers,* those who suffer for righteousness' sake. We are startled by the discrepancy between our ends of life and our Master's. Perhaps we make a few good resolutions, we offer a few prayers more or less hearty and contrite; but very soon the world and self-interest and the love of ease resume their sway, our resolutions fade, our prayers are forgotten, and when we next look into ourselves, we find nothing left but the skeleton and dry bones of Christianity, a mere name and profession and appearance of life. Such fallings away, such humiliating defeats, such abandonment or forgetfulness of holy purposes in the presence of temptation, are no doubt sufficiently depressing; and the true remedy is to have faith in God, to believe that His Spirit will breathe a new life into our failing energies, and in that belief diligently to seek Him. *Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation—Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called*—such are the exhortations by which we are encouraged to persevere in spite of disappointment. *This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I*

am chief. Such is the sure fact on which our faith is to be built, such is the great example of God's mercy, by which we are assured that the soul which is lying dead in trespasses and sins may be quickened to a new life and energy, *by the Name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.*

III. There remains one further application of the text, which to a superficial reader may have appeared the most obvious one of all, but which, as is proved by a survey of the context, was not directly intended by the Prophet, when he recorded the vision. The resurrection of which he assured the despairing exiles around him was not a natural, but a moral and spiritual awakening, not the resurrection of the body from the grave, but the resurrection of a nation from ruin. But at the same time it has been truly said that this great passage, with its vivid and thrilling minuteness of description of the bones exceeding many and exceeding dry, which at God's word came together, *bone to his bone, and were covered with sinews, flesh and skin, and the breath came into them, and they lived and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army,* implies the current belief of the resurrection of the body all the more, as the application is figurative and made to strengthen a disheartened people. Never would the likeness of the Resurrection be used in order to signify the restoration of the people of Israel, unless the Resurrection itself stood firm and was believed; for no one confirms things uncertain through things which are not. Thus, though the passage was not intended to teach the Jewish captives the truth of the Resurrection, yet it is interesting as one of the signs that the hope of immor-

tality was gradually unfolded and made clear to God's people under the Old Testament; although the place which the doctrine occupied in His former dispensation was not, and could not be, so prominent as it has been since the Lord Jesus Christ overcame the sharpness of death and opened the kingdom of Heaven to all believers. And thus, though the vision was originally a mere illustration of a kindred truth, yet we may also receive it as a divine pledge that God's blessing reaches beyond the grave, that His power will still surround us, and His Spirit be breathed into us, in that unknown world to which we all are hastening. We often feel, human nature cannot avoid feeling, a dread and shrinking from the thought of death. Besides the anxiety which may be caused by the consciousness of sin, by our little progress in the ways of godliness, and by our sense of unfitness to meet the scrutiny of an All pure and All seeing God, the mere prospect of the grave, the uncertainty of all that is beyond it, and our natural horror of the dissolution of these mortal bodies of which we are now so anxiously careful, may well bring upon us seasons of disquietude, or persuade us (which is even more dangerous) to force our thoughts by a violent effort from dwelling on the end of this life and the mysterious world beyond it. Surely then the assurance that these bones shall live, that consciousness and activity and the presence of God's Spirit remain for us even beyond the grave, should be welcome in all time of tribulation and despondency, and should stir us up, when we are disposed to be careless or worldly or frivolous, to the sense of our high calling and to the recollection of the promise

that *if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also that sleep in Jesus shall God bring with Him.*

Let me end with one word which will in a manner unite all these applications of the text. Ezekiel, when he is asked whether these bones shall live, refers the whole matter to God. *O Lord, thou knowest.* That Omnipotence which has created and still preserves the world, and will one day call from their graves the innumerable millions of the dead, is sufficient to remove all obstacles which oppose, and effect all purposes which accelerate, the completion of the divine plan. On that Omnipotence ministers of Christ must rely when they preach the Gospel; and so must all faithful servants of Christ when they are seeking to effect any good object, or when they are trying to overcome sin in their own souls. Let us not distrust the *exceeding greatness of that mighty power, which wrought in Christ when He was raised from the dead*, which has wrought and still works in every faithful Christian, and which is sufficient to soften the hardest and cleanse the most polluted heart, to raise up the most fallen cause, to remove the firmest obstructions out of the way of any righteous endeavour. Only remember that this revelation of the sovereignty and Omnipotence of God is given to us as an encouragement to diligence, not as an excuse for indifference. *Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do.* We are to try to effect some good in our generation, to make war against sin and error, to conform our own wayward hearts to Christ's perfect pattern, to look forward with hope and confidence to the day when we shall see Him as He is, because we have a Redeemer and a Guide Who

is mighty to save, Whose Providence overrules all human affairs, Who can breathe a new life into things which seem abandoned to despair and death, and can raise our sinful souls to holiness by His Almighty Power, even as He will hereafter by the same Power quicken our mortal bodies also.

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